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CHATS

"NOW TALKED OF THIS AND THEN OF THAT"

BY G. HAMLEN

BOSTON
LEE AND SHEPARD PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK CHARLES T. DILLINGHAM
1885

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CHATS.

ELECTROTYPED BY
C. J. PETERS AND SON, BOSTON.

TO

THE PERSON TO WHOSE INFLUENCE IS DUE
ANY GOOD WHICH MAY BE FOUND HEREIN, AND WHO
WILL BE THE STERNEST CRITIC OF
ALL THAT IS BAD,

"Our Tender" dedicates these "Chats."

THE story of the way in which the writer of these pages came to be called Our Tender by those to whom her words were addressed is too long to repeat, but the name is so interwoven with the tissue of the "Chats" that to take it from them would change their whole character and make them unfamiliar to her old readers, and so she retains it, trusting that her new friends, if she should acquire any, will soon become accustomed to it, and will permit her to call them also, her boys and girls.

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CHATS.

MUSIC THAT HAS NO CHARMS.

Our Tender knows a music-teacher, a dear little brown-haired, gray-eyed dot of a woman who is almost always good-natured, and never discouraged, even when pupils are scarce, and the dozen little wolves that howl at her door are in full cry, and when she came in the other day, and made a doleful face, and shut up the piano, and rolled the music-wagon under it, pushed the music-stool after it, and then sat down with her back to the whole arrangement, and said, "Betsey, I despiges them," it was evident that something serious was the matter.

"It 's those boys and girls of yours," she said. "Almost all my pupils are your children, and such a life as they lead me!"

"Indolent?" asked Our Tender, hesitating a little. Indolence did not seem likely in her boys

and girls, but then the little teacher looked so doleful.

"No, indeed; I almost wish they were," she answered.

"Dull?" asked Our Tender, hesitating again.

"Dear, no! They learn fast enough when they choose. I'll tell you what I've had to go through to-day. You know Ellen Ray, don't you? She's taken lessons of me for three years, and she is a pretty good player for a young girl; but this morning she looked at me when her lesson was over, and then she looked out of the window, and then down at the carpet, and then she said in a very small voice, 'If you please, I'd like to learn the "Cataract of Diamonds."' You don't know the 'Cataract of Diamonds,' but I do. It's a dreadful thing; nine pages long, with dozens of runs in it, and terrific bangs in the bass, and a series of little whacks in the treble that sound like fire-crackers, and when you play it you have almost to drop off the music-stool to reach some of the notes, and lift yourself nearly to the ceiling to produce the effects that the writer orders you to give. I suppose that the man who wrote it calls himself a composer, but he is n't. I told Miss Ellen that the 'Cataract of Diamonds' was neither worth learning nor worth teaching, and she pouted; but I can cure her. I'm going to play it to her next

week, and show her how silly it is, and she 'll work at something really good afterwards with all the more energy.

"She 's easy enough to manage, I must confess; but what do you think of Amelia Greer, who has n't the voice of a sparrow, and can't manage what she has because she won't open her mouth properly? What do you think she wants to learn? 'Casta Diva,' no less. And by way of companion — companion, you understand — she would like to be taught the French version of 'Robert, Idol of my Heart.' I told her that to learn to sing either of these pieces now would hopelessly strain her voice. I did n't say 'now or ever,' because I 'm not rich enough to lose a pupil, but perhaps when I 've tried her on the scales a few more times, and shown her how high she can't go, she will confine her aspirations to a more limited programme.

"And, for a third example, what do you suppose handsome Mary O'Neil wants? Mary O'Neil, who has a voice with which one might do anything, provided one trained it well! She ought to do nothing for a year but dull, hard work, and she wants to practise a lot of perfect rubbish in the way of songs. I would n't mind even negro melodies, if they were melodies, but she wants to learn the kind of music that goes with such words as, —

The mo-o-o-o-on is high on the se-e-e-as, love,
A-a-hand the lake is low on the mount;
I-i-i-i hear the r-hustling trees, love,
And I ca-hatch the gl-heam o-o-of the fount!

"You must know that kind of song; I made it up as I went along, but you know the gurgling trill on the 'of,' and the whoop at 'fount,' and the general imbecility of the whole thing. Even the accompaniments to those songs are incorrectly written, and the melodies are worse than the words. Miss O'Neil says that she shall ask her mother for another teacher; but anybody with a conscience will tell her just what I have told her. There are lots of persons, however, who can't afford to keep a conscience, poor things! and I suppose I 've lost my pupil.

"Then, fourthly, comes the funniest of all, Tommy Brown, who is undergoing fearful tortures because his mother wants him to learn to play, and whose fat little fingers tumble over each other when he tries to do a chromatic scale.

"Tommy says, 'Pleathe, mith, may I learn a walth?' The dear little fellow could n't play fast enough if he only had to strike one note at a time, but he wanted a 'Thrauth' walth, he said; no Beethoven nor Von Weber for him.

"And last of all comes good little Maggie Kelley, who has practised faithfully at the dance-

music that I have given her, and who can understand nothing whatever in music but time. To-day Maggie said timidly to me, 'If you could give me a bit of Chopin, I'd try so hard. Ever so many girls play Chopin.' Of course I'll give it to her, but what a time she'll have in learning that she does n't understand it, and what a time I'll have!

"And now I have a favor to ask of you. Do make yourself a society for the diffusion of musical knowledge. Do tell my pupils, and all the rest of your girls and boys who are studying music, to try and understand themselves and music, too!

"Those who study music at school, and get a far-off glimpse of the idea that there is a real science as well as a real art under the instruction book, and that the piano-forte is only one means of its expression, are my most hopeful pupils, but even they are impatient of the drudgery which they must perform in order to master any instrument. They 'hate' five-finger exercises, and scales they will not learn. They want something loud and noisy; something astonishing, that will deafen those before whom they play. They care no more for music for music's sake than they care for the Patagonian language, and they ought not to study it."

"And where would you be, little music lady, if they stopped studying?"

"I 'd be teaching a few earnest pupils at a better price," she answered briskly. "Nobody cares more for music than I do; nobody is more anxious to have a knowledge of it generally disseminated; but I 'm sick of this studying music for show, and this satisfaction with a smattering of music. It 's a pretty sight to see half a dozen youngsters gathering about their mother at the piano and all singing together, and I 'm not so sensitive that I can't bear a great many false notes the first two or three times that they sing a piece through. I like to see the mothers anxious that their girls should have accomplishments, but I hate to see them satisfied with sham accomplishments, and content to have them half-learn anything. No wonder that girls never 'keep up their music' after they marry. No wonder that their fathers hate the sound of the piano, on which the girls can't play them the simplest air at sight. No wonder that it is necessary, in order to gather an audience to listen to really good music, for some rich man to pay half the expenses. No wonder that the managers of the clubs and choral societies are at their wits' end to know where to find the money to pay their bills! It is not music but sham that we are worshipping. Ah, when will the day come when

nobody will be allowed to pretend to study an art worth the best of any human creature's mind!"

And the little music teacher opened the piano and began playing the "Funeral March for a Dead Hero," with much expression.

ALL SMOKE.

THE School-girl came in the other evening, and was so prematurely good and meek that we all sat and wondered what was coming, not that she is a deceitful little maid, but because we knew that there must be some cause for such an effect. We teased her, and she was mild; we snubbed her, and she was gentle; we tried to make her laugh, but her mirth was by no means boisterous; we even endeavored to vex her, but it was all in vain, and at last we gave up the effort to find out what was the trouble, and went on with our ordinary talk, and then she said, very softly: —

"I wish you would talk about cigarettes!"

"Anxious to know which is the best kind?" inquired the Poet. "Are you going to Cuba or to Spain, and do you wish to practise some of the customs of the country before you start?"

"No, I *don't*," she cried, "I would n't think of such a thing, not if Queen Christina asked me herself!"

"She is an Austrian, and so she would not invite you to any such amusement, not even if you were in the habit of running in to take tea every evening and were very intimate with her," was the reply; "but why do you want us to talk about cigarettes?"

"I don't care if you *don't*," said she, rather awkwardly, "I — I want Our Tender and the Doctor to talk to the boys about them, for my brother Jimmy smoked one to-day, and I want him *scolded*."

"How old is the aforesaid James?" asked the Lawyer.

"Eleven," she replied, and, after our little chorus of surprised exclamations had subsided, she added, "I don't know that he 's any worse than some of the other boys, but it is *horrid* to see him smoke, and I want him *scared*."

"But suppose there is no way of scaring him," said Our Tender. "If he disobeys your father and mother by smoking, what will he care for what we say?"

"But they don't know it," said the School-girl. "He goes into the apothecary's, and buys a cigarette for a cent, and smokes it on his way to school,

and by the time that he comes home the smell has evaporated, and how can they know anything about it? I only found it out myself by *chance*, and I 've felt so *low* ever since!"

"But, my dear, your father smokes now and then."

"Yes, but he is n't a little boy, and he does n't do it slyly. It seems different."

"It is different, and you have stated the reasons for the difference," said the Doctor. "It is morally worse for Jimmy to smoke, because he conceals it, and it is physically worse because he is a little boy. I don't approve of smoking at all, although with many men the positive pleasure of the habit almost balances the slight physical ill which it works in their case; but with boys it cannot but lead to evil, and when I see a youngster walking along behind a cigar, or worse, a cigarette, I expect to see him intoxicated within ten years, and to be called in to patch up his good-for-nothing health within twenty. You see, after the body has attained its full stature, and has nothing to do but to keep itself in motion from day to day, merely repairing the daily waste of each tissue, it can endure a little extra strain, neutralize a little poison, whether it be alcohol or tobacco, or tea or coffee; but when it is growing, and using all its power to increase its size and

strength, it has no reserve force to assimilate matter like the active principles of the things which I have mentioned. If you give them to it, you clog some of its wheels and force others to a higher rate of speed than is natural, and by and by the machine begins to break down. Then, instead of stopping, you pile on more of the stuff, and then the machine flies to pieces. Don't be frightened, my child. One cigarette won't do all that."

"No, but how am I going to make him stop?" asked the School-girl.

"I shall casually meet him some morning when he is smoking, and shall tell your father," said the Poet. "That will stop him, I think."

"And you said cigarettes were worse than cigars," said the School-girl, turning to the Doctor. "They smell worse, I know, but they are n't so big."

"They are more often made of bad tobacco. and more frequently adulterated," said the Doctor, "and the paper smoke is bad for the lungs, although less harmful to the nerves than the tobacco; but the truth is, that, small although the cigarette is, the man who uses it often smokes more than he who prefers a cigar. It is so small that he lights one after another, without realizing their number, and so cheap that he buys more of

them than he would if they cost as much as cigars. If Jimmy would smoke six cigarettes through a paper mouthpiece plugged with cotton, he would find the plug saturated with a liquid which he could not smell without being made ill, but he smokes without the mouthpiece and takes the stuff into his lungs."

"That 's good! I want him *scared!*" the Schoolgirl cried, so earnestly that we laughed, and the Doctor said gravely, "Well, I can scare him more, if he will believe that I know more than he does. Most of my patients have only half faith in medicine, and trust their feelings more than my science, but the truth is that when a man or a boy begins to use any stimulant, no matter how mild it is, he ceases to be his own master, and nobody can tell where he will stop. He may simply drink tea all his life, and become nervous in his old age; or he may drink coffee and become bilious, and be furiously cross if chance deprive him of it; and with either tea or coffee he may unconsciously overwork himself, and break down long before he should. Or, again, he may smoke himself into paralysis, brought on half by overwork, and half by the direct action of the narcotic, and he may use either tea, coffee, or tobacco, until they lose their effect upon him, and he is compelled to take up something stronger in the shape of alcohol,

and then he will almost assuredly ruin himself and his chances for usefulness. The only absolute safety is in the avoidance of stimulants, at least until one is fully grown, and the strongest, healthiest men are those who do not use them at all."

"What I admire," said the Lawyer, who smokes now and then, and had been trying to look very healthy indeed, "is the coolness with which men and boys defy all rules about smoking. I 've been enjoying myself in a quiet way lately, by having smokers put off the horse cars, and I 'm going to keep it up, until the conductors learn that there shall be no cigars on platforms while I am on the car. What would men say if a lady set fire to a pastile, and let it burn in a horse-car?"

"Yes, indeed," said the School-girl. "I've seen them sniff, if they thought that a lady had too much perfumery about her dress, and if a little *boy* eats *peanuts*, — my!"

"And I have lately seen men smoking in dry-goods shops," said Our Tender. "Of course most of the persons present were ladies, and of course the goods were injured by being scented with tobacco. No wonder some ladies have written angry letters to the papers about the matter. We may be weak and frivolous, but we have no habit that makes us so disagreeable to others as smoking does, have we, my dear?"

"That 's what I told Jimmy," said the Schoolgirl, "and he advised me to get an accordeon, and said that that was as fatal at long range as a cigarette."

"Not quite," said the Doctor, "for it does not poison the air, and tobacco smoke does, for some persons in feeble health; but you might buy the accordeon all the same. It may chasten Jimmy into common sense, and I 'm quite sure that any cigarette smoker needs it. You send him to me, and I 'll talk to him."

Ought any of the boys to go to the Doctor with Jimmy, or are they all too sensible to be aping the weaknesses of their elders by trying to smoke? If Our Tender must tell the truth, a boy and a cigarette make such a funny combination that she has to laugh when she sees them, although she knows that the boy is hurting himself as certainly as the cigarette is burning, but she smiles as one does when a monkey takes up a sharp knife. It is going to cut him, but how funny he is with his air of knowing all about it!

PRETTY POLL.

"POLLY! Polly! Po-o-o-o-r Polly! Ni-ice Polly! Polly wants a peanut! Poor Poll! Bow-wow! Maeow! Polly! Polly! Polly! Peanut! Chrrrr! Ubi dee i dee i da! Peanut!"

When Polly gets as far as this somebody usually attends to her wants and gives her her peanuts, and is very thankful if not rewarded by a vicious little nip on knuckle or finger-tip, for Polly, like many clever animals, is mischievous, and has no scruples about playing a joke on a friend. Thanks to her smartness, she is generally excused for her naughtiness, for what can you expect of a parrot?

Those of you who are in the lowest geography class would tell Our Tender, if she asked you, that Africans were black; but Polly, although she is an African, is quite gray, except the tip of her tail, which is scarlet. She is old, nobody knows how old, for the sea-captain who brought her to America could only say that she had lived in England a long while, and that it must have been many years since she first found her way out of an egg, and opened her yellow eyes on the wonders of a tropical forest. She was an ugly little thing then, with her hooked beak and crooked claws,

for her pretty gray feathers were not grown, and she was awkward in figure, and not brisk and alert in movement as she is now. However, mamma parrot took great care of her, and kept her out of the way of snakes, and gave her plenty of food, and she soon grew pretty and graceful.

They used to have good times in Africa, our Polly and the other little gray parrots, and the big parrots, their aunts, and uncles, and grandmothers, and great-grandmothers. Very early in the morning they used to wake up and go to market, that is fly off in search of fruits and seeds, seeing on the way many strange sights, any one of which would amuse you for days. Sometimes they would encounter a long string of monkeys gliding swiftly along the tops of the trees on the same errand as themselves, and sometimes they would find a group of them chattering together over some mighty matter of state in monkeyland, such as whether or not it was right for a little monkey to throw nutshells at her big sister, or fair for her big sister to refuse to break a cocoanut for her. Then again, they might see the great boa constrictor lying along a branch and slowly dropping his lazy head toward the gentle doe who was nibbling the bark of the tree, whereupon the parrots would shriek angrily, and the doe would leap away, and the ugly reptile would draw its head back, and lie on

its branch again and sluggishly dream of the way in which it would have crushed the poor little doe could it only have reached her. Sometimes, too, they would see the great lion lurking in the forest near a spring, and waiting for an opportunity to pounce on a young antelope when it should come down to drink; and sometimes they would see him far below them in some open forest space, tearing his prey in pieces, while the ugly spotted hyenas lurked about waiting for him to go away that they might feast upon the remnants of his repast. And now and then, flying along the edge of the forest and looking out into the desert, they might see the white ostrich racing over the silent sands, its rapid feet bearing it swiftly along, and its short wings fluttering slightly as it ran. Just think of it! It was like going to the circus every morning.

Then, when every little parrot had eaten all that he wanted, the whole flock took a bath, and hid away in a thick-leaved tree while the sun grew hotter and hotter until the very insects became comparatively still, and then at night there was another flight, and another hunt for food, and endless gossip and small talk and petty adventure before and after, and then a pleasant night's sleep, and another long day of happiness. When the rainy season came, Polly and all the other parrots flew

away to warmer countries, and when the rainy season came there they flew back again, and sometimes they lived as long as ninety years in this pleasant, easy way. But one day, alas! for her, some English sailors came into the forest and carried away Polly and some of her friends, and they sailed away and came into a cold country where the sun was never so hot as it should be, according to Polly's reckoning, and where there were no lions, and no palm-trees, and no processions of chattering monkeys, but thousands and thousands of creatures who wore woollen stuffs instead of hair or feathers, and made such funny noises that Polly mocked them, just as in her dear old home she had mocked the forest sounds. And, finding that sugar and cracker and other goodies were to be got by mocking, Polly tried to imitate everything that she heard.

Then she found herself aboard another great ship, and was brought to another country, rather more sunny than the first, but still not like her dear Africa; and then she was brought to us, and with us she has lived ever since, and we hope she may live until she is ninety years old.

Very early in the morning she wakes us up, does Polly, by screaming at the milkman, who is leaving the can at the back gate. She barks at him as a possible thief; she mews at him; she

scolds at him as a bad boy; and last of all, when he gives the gate a parting bang, she cries, "Police," and goes through nearly all the noises that she knows, so that she is rather tired and sleepy by the time that we come down to breakfast. The smell of coffee arouses her, however, and no peace do we have until she obtains her peanuts and soaked cracker. Having got these, she climbs all over her cage, and gives us her opinion of everything in general.

"Naughty girl, Mollie," she cries, and sensitive Mollie, who is behaving her best, starts and blushes. "Good girl, Agnes," she whispers softly, just as two-year-old Agnes is doing something particularly naughty, and then when we all laugh she moans, "Oh, what a wicked world!" and straightway begins to whistle, "I am the Captain of the Pinafore," closing with an ear-piercing squall in imitation of a steam-whistle.

Once when a quiet, gentle old lady from the country was sitting near her cage, Polly watched her for a long time, and then suddenly screamed, "Fire!" in a tone that brought the old lady to her feet in an minute, and caused her to scream as loud as Polly. Thereupon that bad bird actually executed something very like a dance, and sang as much as she knew of "I want to be an Angel." Another time there were visitors at dinner,

and Polly's master thought that he would let her show off her good manners, so he had her brought in to the table and set down by his plate. He gave her all the meat that she wanted to eat, and Polly ate it with great precision and elegance, but what do you think that wicked little fowl did afterwards? Her master usually dismissed her by saying, "You 've had enough; that will do." But this day, after giving her her last piece of meat, he forgot all about her, and mistress Polly flew back to her cage of her own accord. Arrived there she sat in her favorite perch, and as soon as there was a pause in the conversation, she screamed, "You 've had enough; that will do," with such amazing distinctness that nobody could fail to understand what her opinion was. Naughty Polly!

We have all learned not to say anything before Polly that we do not wish to have repeated to us, and not to speak unkindly of others in her presence, and no doubt the restraint does us good, but it is provoking sometimes to have to leave the room when discussing Christmas presents, lest she should "tell."

But there she goes again, just as if she knew that somebody was talking of her, and this is what she says, —

"Polly! Pol-ly! Over the br-ight blue sea

Peter Piper picked a ——" here she falls into a sputter — Peter is always too much for Polly.

But now she begins again, —

"Shool, shool, shool-a-rool! Don't care! Did n't do it! Polly! Give Polly one peanut! Dog! Dog out there! Children go to school! Chirp! Chirp! Tweet! tweet! tweet!"

Oh, Polly! We must stop our ears!

SHE WANTED MEDICINE.

How do Our Tender's boys and girls like the spring? Do they, when the catkins begin to appear on the willows, and when the fruit trees begin to put forth their leaf buds, feel a fresher life, or are they languid, not to say lazy, and inclined to creep about the house, and to crawl into the most comfortable corner of the sofa?

Said a little girl the other day, "Oh, this spring weather makes me feel so tired and heavy. I must have some medicine." Now Our Tender is not a doctor, but she felt moved to give that little girl a prescription, and said she: "My dear child, the medicines that you require are *elixir ambulans* and *aqua pura*."

"*Elix* — and *aqua pura*," repeated the little patient slowly, "why I thought that I needed taraxacum and steel wine, and Aunt Jane advised iron and calisaya, and Aunt — "

"Never mind your aunt this time, but follow my advice."

"Well, but are the things hard to take?" asked the patient.

"Few medicines that do any good are very easy to swallow."

"I like nice, sweet tinctures," said the invalid, with a languid air.

"I dare say. And you like candy and chocolates and cake and nuts and popped corn?"

The sick one nodded.

"And you 'admire' ice cream, and 'adore' frozen pudding, and think that crystallized fruit is 'lovely?'"

The poor sufferer murmured an ecstatic "Yes."

"And in the winter you stay in the house for fear of taking cold, and sit up late, and eat all the nice things that your mother will allow you to have, and as much more besides as you can buy out of your pocket-money, and you drink tea and coffee at every meal?"

"Yes," she replied.

"And now, when the spring comes, you begin to feel tired?"

"Oh, yes, indeed," said she; "and it 's so hard to get up in the morning, and the only time that I really feel bright is after tea when the gas is lighted. Then I can study and work and talk, but in the daytime I am really stupid."

"Well," said Our Tender, "as you have promised to follow my advice in this matter, in the first place you will go to bed at eight o'clock every night."

"Why, I 'm fifteen years old," said the invalid, straightening up her trim little figure.

"No matter if you are forty-five. If you were quite well, I would let you sit up until nine o'clock, but you are sick, and must take a little extra rest. And, by the way, what time do you wake up in the morning?"

"Oh, when they call me," was the answer, with a guilty look. "But I often go to sleep again, and I have n't any strength when I do get up, and I don't want any breakfast, and then I 'm so weary and faint that I don't want any dinner. They say that steel wine would —"

"Never mind about that," I interrupted. "You never really wake up, then? You don't remember what it was when you were a little girl, to open your eyes and see the dawn just peeping between the curtains, and feel too wide awake to stay in bed another minute, and so to prowl all through

the house, waking everybody up, and earning several scoldings for yourself, do you?"

"Yes, but I'm older now, and know better," cried the little girl.

"Don't you know that if you were perfectly well, you would be brightest in the morning?"

"Well, I told you I was sick," said she, soberly.

"So you did. Well, then, you will go to bed at eight o'clock, and you will not eat anything for two hours before you do go, unless you find yourself very wakeful. If you do, you may eat a cracker or two just before you go up stairs. You won't drink any tea either. The sleepier you are in the evening, the better, for a while. You will get up when you wake up, and not before. Ask your mother to excuse you from going to school for a day or two, if you must, but accustom yourself to rising of your own accord. Don't lie abed after your eyes are open, either. As soon as you are really well, you will wake up early; but indulging in lazy dozing will do you real harm, and make you wakeful at night. Don't drink any coffee for breakfast, but force yourself to eat something, and take a luncheon to school for a day or two, until your morning appetite becomes good. Take a walk and indulge in a good romp, either before or after breakfast, and another be-

tween schools, and another before tea, if you can; and if you can't, accustom yourself to moving about quickly. Steel and iron are both good in their way, and calisaya bark is good, but the strength that you have in your own organization is a great deal better, and if you will do your best for yourself you need not ask any mineral or any drug to help you. When you are old, and your body is wearing out, then you may mend it with such things as the doctors tell you to use, but for the present you no more need medicine than you need a crutch and a cane."

"You said I was n't to drink tea or coffee," said the patient; "what can I drink, — chocolate?"

"No, water, that 's the second half of the dose, *aqua pura*. If you had been as bright as you will be after a week or two of taking my medicine, you would have understood me when I gave you that bit of cheap Latin, a while ago. You 'll find out what *elixir ambulans* means after you 've walked awhile, too."

"But I need real medicine," objected the sick little girl, "and taraxacum cured my cousin."

"My child, if you want taraxacum, eat all the dandelion greens that you can get. They won't harm you, and may keep you from devouring sweet things, but if you will walk as much as you

ought and drink nothing but water, you will find that you can eat plenty of honest sugar-plums, without suffering much."

"I would just as lief have pickled limes," said the youthful patient, looking very virtuous and self-sacrificing.

"I dare say; but you will let pickled limes alone, and pickles, too, even at the table, and, unless you are hungry enough to eat dry bread, you don't need a luncheon of any kind."

"Well, but would n't you take anything?" persisted this little girl. And then Our Tender looked as solemn as she knew how, and said, "My dear, I don't think anything ails you; and I do think that if you follow my prescription you will be strong and well in a week or two, but any medicine that might do you good if you needed it would surely harm you if you did not. There is nothing that will more certainly make an invalid of you than ignorantly taking medicine. Go to a doctor if you can afford it, if not, go to a city dispensary, but never trifle with your health by swallowing this or that tincture or pill, because you are told that it has done somebody else good. Now you promised to follow my advice, you know. Go out and walk to begin with, and come in again in a fortnight, and tell me how you are."

PREPARING TO BE OLD.

"Oh, dear, how old!" said the boy as he looked at a venerable man who sat on the shady side of the deck and regarded the forts and the islands, the dancing water and the clear summer sky, with an expression quite inscrutable to the boy's young eyes, but intelligible enough to any one who has ever known what it is to lose the childish feeling that this life is to last forever. "It may be the last time," was the thought underlying the smile that trembled a little now and then, but seemed so sweet to the children playing about, and looking for it eagerly. The last time that the old eyes that had gazed on so much joy and so much sorrow, that had seen so much beauty and had wept so many bitter tears, should open to the daylight, had possibly gone by; it might be that when they closed at night they would look no more upon the sunshine of this world, and the thought that this might be so had been with the old man for years, but he seemed so calm and peaceful that after a moment the boy added, "And how happy he looks!"

"Could you be happy if you were as old as that?" he asked, after the old man had been led away by a dignified gentleman who called him

"Father," and after Our Tender had tried to explain her ideas about his thoughts, "Could you be happy if you never did anything all day long without thinking, 'I may never do this again?'"

"Surely, my dear," said Our Tender, "you must know there are good men whose whole life in the cloister is but a preparation for death, and you do not doubt that they are happy. Is anything that we do so nearly perfect that we should very bitterly regret the possibility of never doing it again, that we should be content to continue doing it forever? Any one who has had a dangerous sickness has lived face to face with the old man's thought for days, and no one finds it very bitter. You saw for yourself that he looked happy, although he seemed to be saying 'good-by' to the pretty sight before him. My dear boy, it is n't that thought that would make an aged heart sad. A good man, or, to put it more strongly, a sensible man, knows that there are better things beyond this life; and it is not the present that saddens him, but the past. Now, our old man has all his life been preparing to be old. He is not perfect, — nobody is, you know, — but he has always sought to do things from the highest possible motives. In all matters, however small, he has acted from principle, and although

he has doubtless made many mistakes, he has the profound respect of every one who knows him. He has occupied very high positions, but so stainless was his life that no one has ever dared to hint anything against him; and now even those who have opposed him reverence his gray hairs and his noble life. There is nothing unpleasant for him to remember, and it is the wrong which they have done that makes the aged sad. Their time for action is almost over; they feel that they cannot undo past wrongs, and so they are miserable. Then, again, he has always taken good care of his body, so that he has no dyspepsia and rheumatism, or any other unnecessary disease, to rack him with pain until he hardly knows whether it is his mind or his soul or his body that is suffering. He has prepared himself to be old and happy at the same time."

"Well," the boy said argumentatively, "suppose he had n't had any money, and had n't gone to college and learned so much; suppose he had been very poor indeed, and had to work so hard that he had n't been able to fit himself to be all the grand things that he has been; suppose he had had a dull life. Don't you believe he would be sorry to say, 'It 's the last time!' when he looked at pretty things?"

"It is n't what we have had to do, but the way

in which we have done what came to us to be done, that makes us happy or miserable in our old age. It was only last year that one died whose name was never heard outside her own family, who had worked very hard almost all her life, and yet her last days were as peaceful, her dying smile as sweet, as are the old man's whom we have just watched. She had done what she could. You know whom I mean, don't you?"

"Yes," the boy said, very softly; for he had sorrowed as deeply as his elders when the dear old friend of all of us had been taken away.

"Did anybody ever tell you anything about her early life?" Our Tender asked.

"No," the boy answered; "she always seemed just the same ever since I can remember; quiet and happy, and so kind to us!"

"She was not so old as you when she began to earn her own living," Our Tender said; and then she told him the story of one of the most beautiful lives that she ever knew. Would you like to hear it, boys and girls?

Almost a hundred years ago, in a quiet country village, there was born a little girl whose father had been a soldier; and who, when she was eight years old, found herself one of a little family group in which there was next to no money, but a great deal of high-hearted courage. The war

from which her father had come home to die a lingering death had left the country very poor, and there was nothing which her mother could find to do to support her children. Neither could she manage the farm alone, for there was no money to pay ploughmen and harvesters, and she could not even sell the land, for nobody wanted it; and so, after struggling with the inevitable for a time, she "bound out" two of her little girls and struggled along with the other two children, knitting and sewing to earn enough for their daily bread. Binding out, you must know, means giving up all right to the control of a child in consideration of having her taught a trade, and in old times New England housekeepers used to take little girls in this way and teach them housekeeping, making them work enough, and very often more than enough, to pay for their board. Our little girl lived with a kind woman; but there was a great deal to do in the large house, and no time for school, and she had to teach herself to write, after she had obtained a little glimpse into the mystery of reading by a few days at school. It was a very pretty hand that she taught herself, and as her memory retained everything that she found in books, she was by no means ignorant when she grew up. The love of reading acquired in those early days never failed even to the last

day of her life, although her mistress did not give her many hours to spend on it, but taught her every kind of household work, and sewing and knitting and embroidery, and the little girl worked so hard at them that she was able to earn money, and at last bought a whole year of her time, and at seventeen was her own mistress, with every housewifely art at her finger-tips. She was almost instantly offered a place as housekeeper, and here she showed that she could direct others as well as she could submit to direction; and in work and study she lived on, happy and busy, until she was twenty-five, when she married. She and her husband were much alike in their ways, — industrious, but enjoying amusement at proper times; exquisitely thrifty, but hospitable and liberal; and they lived harmoniously together for more than sixty years, and they saw their great-grandchildren before he died, leaving her lonely, but not unhappy. And then there were a few years of perfect rest, during which she was lovingly cherished by her daughters, and then she too passed away, and now her descendants, remembering her, say, "Which of us will ever be like grandmother?"

There never was such housekeeping, they say; there never was such nursing. Never did anybody else show herself able to watch all night

with sick neighbors, and still manage her own household perfectly. Who but she, when her husband had set his heart on buying their home, could have aided him as efficiently as she did? Who would have been a second mother to so many grandchildren as from time to time came to live with her for a season? Who ever worked so untiringly, and yet found time to read every new history of her country, and every new biography of Washington or the other Revolutionary heroes, until she was mistress of every line of them, to say nothing of reading novels? Who so steadfast in the performance of her religious duties, and yet so modest about them? And who ever was so lovely when she was old?

That is the refrain of all their praises, "Who ever was so lovely when she was old!" But they did not begin to realize that she was old until she was eighty-six, and could not dance at her birthday party. She always seemed young, and never was heard to regret her past life, although it had been so full of care and of hard work. She had to the last the same patient, happy smile that rested on the face of the old statesman as he sat and looked across the harbor, and yet she was an humble, unpretending woman.

"Just because she did her best as she went along," the boy said, with a tear or two in his gray

eyes, as Our Tender finished telling him the little story. "Well, I 'll try to be like her; she was my great-grandmother, you know," and away he went, yellow curls flying, in pursuit of another boy's hat, which the wind had blown away, and he was very thoughtful for others all day, "getting ready to be old," he said. And you, boys and girls, are you preparing to be old?

SHE WOULD BE A "POETESS."

Why should boys and girls be anxious to grow up into weary men and women before half their pleasant childhood is gone?

For instance, here is a little girl who, judging from her writing and her manner of expressing herself, cannot be more than thirteen years old, but she wants to be "a poetess," and she thinks all the years of her life are wasted until she is one. She writes to ask how she shall go to work to become one, as if the child had any business with such nonsense for the next five years at least. And she also inquires what shall she do with her poems when they are written, and whether she shall send them to a newspaper or a magazine, or

find a publisher for them; and whether or not it will be a good plan for her to try and write prose first; and whether there are not any Boston newspapers that would like her "work." She sends Our Tender some of her "work," and it is not too harsh to say that it looks very much like "play," for there is not the faintest sign about one of her little manuscripts that she has taken any pains with it. Her little "poem" is halting in metre and defective in grammar. Her "story" has no more point than a bludgeon, and is badly punctuated, and her "letter," instead of containing news or gossip, or anything interesting, bristles with "I's," and is principally devoted to an account of some very dull adventures. And, crowning enormity in the eyes of an editor, "poem," "story," and "letter," are written on both sides of the paper.

She asks for "criticism" and "advice" about the prose as well as the poetry. Now, Our Tender must confess to a lack of sympathy for very young girls and boys who are trying to rush into print without due preparation for it. If they have a talent for writing they must strengthen and encourage it by long and patient years of practice, and they must not expect to be able to sell their work until they are long and long out of their "teens." There have been a few boy poets, but their work was immeasurably inferior to the things

which they did later in life, and the girl-poets have been echoes at best. However, Our Tender, instead of trusting entirely to her own judgment, called the Poet, the Doctor, and the Lawyer to leave the library, and to come to her room to advise her, and, lest they should prove too gentle, she also invited the Editor, who has been a life-long victim of "poetesses," and who therefore knows thoroughly how to temper mercy with justice.

"Waste basket!" cried he, the moment his eye fell on the sheets of paper. "Your girl rolls her manuscript; she writes on both sides, she does n't punctuate, she does n't enclose any stamps for return postage. Waste basket!"

"But you have n't read it yet," remonstrated Our Tender.

"And don't mean to, and don't need to! Life is brief. Any rising Chatterton that does not know the first rules of a printing office need not apply to me! What is it? A poem, a story, and a letter. No metre, no plot, and no news! Don't stare! It does n't require second sight to tell a man what to expect from such manuscript as that! Oh, yes! I know that Greeley wrote a wretched hand, and Bloss could not read his own manuscript, and that four-line letter of Halstead's, which I have at home, will puzzle me to the day

of my death, but when those men first began to work, and had plenty of time, they didn't send such stuff as that to a printer, and they never wrote on both sides of their paper, nor rolled their manuscript. A young author has no excuse for negligence of any kind."

"But the poor child has only just begun to write, and she is doing it for her own amusement."

"The woods are full of them," rejoined the Editor. "Those girls who work for their own amusement are a nuisance to all real toilers. They send their long letters and poems to papers that would only pay small prices at the best, and offer to give them away, and, if the editor be not a man of principle, he takes them, and discharges some poor creature earning a few dollars a week. There are some dailies and weeklies that take clever short poems and letters, paying for them only in copies of the paper, and giving the writer to understand that the correction which his verses receive before publication, and the privilege of becoming used to print, are worth something."

"What do you mean by becoming used to print?" interrupted the Doctor.

"If you had ever written for the press, you would not ask," replied our Editor. "Even a poem seems different in type and in manuscript,

but stories and letters undergo a much greater change. Sentences that were fair and graceful in our own handwriting are crude and absurd when rendered by the printer; paragraphs shrink unaccountably; tautologies come to light; what we thought wit seems impertinence; and often when a man reads things of which he had expected to be proud, he wants to bury himself where he will never be heard of more. Sometimes the greatest favor that you can do a really modest youth is to print one of his productions just as he sends it, not allowing the proof-reader to correct one of his blunders, but it hurts the reputation of your paper to do that very often. The best thing for your little girl is to try to publish her productions in the newspaper of her own town, but she won't do it, and I can't be bothered with her."

"You editors are dreadful fellows," sighed the Poet.

"Much you know about it," answered the other; "you, whose work is sure to be accepted by somebody! But your little girl wanted some advice about becoming a poetess! Do you give it to her, then! If the recipe be good, I will try it myself. 'What 's sauce for the goose,' you know. Come, sir, what will transform us into poets? Don't be hackneyed. Don't quote the line about 'born, not made;' we all know that."

"I can't say anything better," replied our Poet. "She can't become a poet She either is or is n't one. Anybody can write verses, as anyone can write prose, but she cannot learn to make herself a poet, and will wickedly waste her time in trying. If her poetry be good it will find its way to the people somehow, and will be loved and learned by heart. A very little spark of the divine fire will warm the heart of the world to kindly regard, and is too precious to be carelessly blown out, but her manuscript shows that she is no poet. Genius is above no painstaking. A poet may never attend to the small details of penmanship of which you editors think so much, but he will spare no pains in making his work conform with the rules of his art, and this girl has never learned the difference between trochaic and iambic metre, skips from one to the other with perfect freedom, and throws in dactyls when she becomes extraordinarily lazy. Give her story to our legal friend."

"I 've been looking at it," said our Lawyer, "while you and the Editor there have been glorifying your respective vocations, and it is pretty bad. It abounds in phrases only tolerable in daily newspapers, when matter is prepared in a great hurry, and which are inelegant at the best. It bristles with italics and quotations, and is sentimental. The letter is worse, for anybody ought

to be able to write a tolerable newspaper letter, but it is the legitimate result of the kind of newspaper letter that some editors publish. My friends, the young person whose work we are discussing belongs to the new school of journalistic aspirants. Formerly these persons took pains, and merely showed their doubtful talent by trying to write of things which they did not understand; now they take no pains at all, and write about themselves, thinking that because half-a-dozen well-known correspondents say 'I,' they can do so too. I should like to explain to them that the world cares nothing at all for them, or their likes and dislikes, and that what it wants is news. And I should like to tell the girls who yearn to sign their own names to these little effusions which can never give them any reputation, that she who thus puts her name into the hands of the paragraph-writers is guilty of indelicacy, as much as she who distributes her photographs carelessly among her acquaintances. Neither girl means anything wrong, but both make it easy for persons to talk unkindly about them."

"And you, Doctor," asked Our Tender, "have n't you a kind word for this poor child? I said some sharp things to her myself, thinking that some one of you would temper them, but even the Poet is severe, and I don't know what to expect from you."

"Madam," replied the Doctor, "if I could think of anything supremely harsh, trust me, I would say it. The bite of the writing spider is often fatal, and needs heroic remedies. Unless somebody cures your little girl, she will be spoiled for life. Tell her the truth. She has no talent for writing above commonplace. The bitterness of this will be a good tonic for her mind, enervated by the day-dreaming that preceded the writing of such stuff, and exhausted by doing it badly and awkwardly. Not one kind word shall I say to sweeten the dose."

Poor little girl! But then, did she not deserve it? And did we not all mean well?

MISS CASH.

A LITTLE letter came to Our Tender one day, — a little letter written in a stiff, but perfectly clear hand, and couched in phraseology which resembled the handwriting. The little sheet was from one of those hard-working children whom one sees in the large shops when the salesman calls "cash," and who spirit away one's purchases and one's money, and return with change and a bundle in so

little time that one is inclined to think them fairies in spite of their poor dress and tired faces; in short, it came from a cash girl, and of all things she asked, "What should she do about her lunch?" She had read that the New York physicians, after making all possible inquiries, both of those who employ large numbers of salesgirls and of the girls themselves, have decided that the girls would be much healthier and happier if they would be sensible about their eating instead of devouring cream-cakes and pickles and candy, which may taste good, but which do not make blood, and consequently do not make one strong. This little girl took her luncheon from home; she hoped that next year, when her salary would be larger, she should be able to buy a warm dinner occasionally, if only she should find a very cheap place, but meanwhile, she inquired, "What shall I do? I buy a cream-cake now and then, and perhaps it is wicked extravagance, as the doctors say, but it tastes good, and there are days when bread and butter seems like a chip, and my mother will not allow me to have cake and doughnuts for luncheon."

There 's one thing that you have then, little Miss Cash, whether your luncheon tastes good or not, Our Tender answered, and that is a sensible mother. There are light sweet-cakes that hurt

nobody, but doughnuts are things which nobody who values health ought to eat at all; and pie, unless very carefully made, is slow poison — no more, no less. The crust, even if dry, contains melted fat, which is wholly indigestible, and when wet with fruit juice or custard is about as wholesome as sole leather would be. Still bread and butter, bread and butter, for six days in the week is rather tiresome. Why don't you vary the bill of fare by a bit of dried beef or smoked fish or salt fish, now and then? Why not have a boiled egg or an apple occasionally? These things cost no more than butter, and most of them are more nourishing, and, even if they were not, they would be better for you because they are a change. Gingerbread "shortened" with beef suet costs less than buttered bread, and perhaps your mother would make you a little loaf some Saturday when she is baking, so as to give you three gingerbread luncheons the next week, or maybe she would let you have a cup custard now and then. One can eat plain bread very comfortably one day, if looking forward to bread and custard the next. Then, if you like cheese, you could have a bit of that occasionally, or a radish or two in the season, and a pickle will not hurt you now and then, if you remember that it is to be taken as a relish and not as the principal part of your dinner. Then

again, if any of the other girls who eat dinner when you do have mothers as sensible as yours, you might exchange part of your lunch for part of theirs, with benefit to both of you.

You speak about tea and coffee in your letter, and seem to think that it would be very nice to have them, but Our Tender does not quite agree with you. A little hot drink after your luncheon would be very good for you, but if taken with your luncheon would do you some harm Your mouth is provided with all the moisture that your food needs, and you should learn to eat without drinking, but after your meal a little warm milk or warm milk and water would be good for you. If in the shop where you work there is any way of obtaining hot water, you would find that a cent's worth of milk, which you could take from home in the morning would make a nice drink mixed with enough water to warm it. You would have to learn to be very careful about washing the little bottle in which you carried the milk down in the morning, but it is not a bad thing to know how to take care of glass, and when you are grown up you may be glad of the lesson. Did you ask why Our Tender does not approve of your drinking tea and coffee? Because they are stimulants, and will tempt you to work beyond your real ability, by making you feel better than you really are,

so that if you should fall sick you would be quite worn out, instead of having some strength in reserve.

As for what you shall do when you grow older, and have money enough to buy that occasional warm dinner, Our Tender has a very strong conviction that it is your duty to spend a reasonable amount of money for food then and now, too. She does not mean that you are to neglect your duty to your parents for the sake of pampering yourself with delicacies, but she does mean that when the choice lies between a bit of finery, or a horse-car ride, and good nourishing food, that you are to choose the food. It is rather discouraging to look back at one's accounts at the end of the year, and seeing how much money one has spent for eatables, to reflect upon the gloves and frocks that it would have bought; but which is better, gloves and frocks, or strength and health and the ability to earn more money in the coming year than one earned in the past?

There is a great deal in knowing how to manage about luncheons, even when one comes to be a big girl, Miss Cash. For instance, one needs to find out at which restaurants one obtains the most food for one's money, and then one needs to learn the beauties of co-operation. Do you know what that means? It means that when you and an-

other Miss Cash go to dinner, you order one portion of something and two plates, and share the food and the bill between you. Rich men do this, men who could afford to pay your year's income for a meal, but who are not ashamed to save a little money instead of wasting it by ordering more than they want to eat, so don't let any false pride keep you from doing it. If you do not find your share of the dinner enough for you, eat an apple after you return to the shop. Buy oatmeal or Graham crackers by the pound, and make your dinner on them now and then. If you take them three times a week you can have three warm dinners, in partnership, of course, and still have change left out of a dollar, for you ought to be able to get half a beefsteak for twenty cents, and you cannot eat more than a third of a pound of crackers at a meal, so that there will be twenty cents left for your apples and milk, or for a reserve fund.

This advice is for you, young Mr. Cash, as well as for Miss Cash, but you do not need it so much as she, because there are a great many cheap places open to you to which she cannot go. Near the large markets you will always find eating-rooms in which the meat is good and the price very low; the coffee will be very bad, but you need not drink it, and you may also refrain from

taking ice-water, either with or after your meal, unless you want to hurt yourself.

There are places in nearly all the large cities at which one can buy a plate of meat for five cents and other things in proportion, and in Washington there is a penny lunch, so that it is possible to obtain food for much less than the sum mentioned, but it seems better to put the figures so high that you will not be disappointed when you come to use them. The things at which you should aim in getting your luncheon are: 1. A sufficient quantity of food. 2. A variety. 3. Cheapness. If you put the third requisite in place of the first or even of the second, you do so at the risk of your health.

Our Tender remembers the dear little bright-eyed boy whom she saw curled up on a window-seat in the upper passage of a big shop the other day, eating dry bread, and she hopes that he and his fellows, some time or other, may see their way to obtaining better meals without spending any more money. For instance, this particular Cash might have shared his bread with a boy who had two apples, or with some boy who bought five cents' worth of gingerbread, or the three might have bought their luncheons together and made an excellent meal for each. Why did n't they try it?

BRAIN OR STOMACH?

THE preceding Chat was the cause of a great many letters.

"I don't understand," wrote one girl, "how you can tell us to spend so much money on dinners. What should we have left to buy books and newspapers, when we only earn $5 a week?"

"I think," wrote another, "that we ought to spend some of that weekly dollar for dinners on educating ourselves."

"Is it right to think so much about eating?" asked another. "I am studying very hard, and want my money to pay for books for the evening school. It seems to me that many great men have had to live on very poor fare when they were young."

And all this made Our Tender think of the time when she began to learn to embroider, and insisted on working from right to left, because she had been taught to sew and hem in that direction, and when, having learned the embroidery stitch, she was not content until she had tried to sew from left to right, and had found that it was impossible. In a young mind a new idea seldom obtains a place in any way except by the cuckoo policy of turning out one already in possession,

and although the first occupant of the nest may come back and fight hard for his old place, never again does he have quite so much room as he at first occupied. Do you not know, boys, that when you read a new book or learn a new game the old ones seem of small consequence for a time, and even when the new one has grown old you never think quite so much of the others again?

As you become older you will find yourself outgrowing this, or rather you will pass so quickly through the processes of giving your whole mind to an idea, and of putting it in its proper place with regard to others, that you will hardly be conscious of their succession, and then you will not write little letters like these, which simply amount to confessions that some of you are not able to entertain the idea of educating yourselves and that of taking care of your health at the same time.

Now, please understand that Our Tender does not take back one word that she has said about the value of a good education or of the great happiness that it brings, but neither does she take back a word about the importance of good food. You, young lady, who earn but $5 a week, must content yourself with public library books and with a newspaper taken in partnership with somebody else, and you certainly cannot afford to

spend a whole dollar a week on your dinners. Still you ought to spend almost that. Your rent ought to be about $1 a week, and you certainly can get a lodging for that by sharing your room with another girl, and you ought to spend nearly half of what remains of your income on food, and leave the other half for dress and sundries. It may seem extravagant, but food is not so expensive as pills, as you would find out if you starved yourself until you had to send for the doctor. Moreover, one of your best chances of earning more than $5 a week is to keep your health, and you must put nothing before it except your duty to God and to your family. It may, some time or other, be your high privilege to sacrifice your health in nursing a mother, a sister, or a friend, or in deeds of charity, but it is never right to give it up for the sake of vanity of any kind.

The second letter is so much like the first that it needs no separate answer, but the third introduces a new element, and when Our Tender read it to the Doctor, he cried, "There he is again!"

"Who?" asked she.

"Just that Dr. Franklin," said the Doctor, with a little laugh. "He has hopelessly poisoned the youth of this country for all time. He studied when he should have slept, he read by firelight because he was determined to learn, and, as he

inherited a strong constitution, it did not kill him; and now no American child is contented unless he, too, is violating the laws of health, but thinks, when he is doing things for which he should be punished, that he is on the way to be a second Franklin."

"Well, Franklin was eighty-four years old when he died."

"Yes, and he suffered torments from indigestion, and so did Napoleon, who was another of your model book-worms and ignorers of the body. I don't remember one of those histories of great men that begin with 'He often studied half the night,' or 'He starved himself to obtain the money to buy books,' that do not end in consumption or some other disease which might have been warded off by proper care. Tell your boys and girls this; we cannot all be certain that we have genius; in fact, we may be tolerably sure that we have not; but we cannot doubt that we have bodies, and we can do our duty by them. The genius, if it be in us, will show itself in time, and will be none the weaker for waiting. Why, remember the long list of poets and artists who have died before they were forty years old, and think how much greater their fame would have been, how much more they might have done for the world, had they but taken care of their bodies when they

were young, and have lived long enough to reinforce their genius by the wisdom which comes with years. I grant you that the thought of the young Raphael producing immortal pictures with almost boyish fingers is inspiring; but what is it beside the thought of that other painter, who, born nine years before Raphael, outlived him by forty-four years, and who, at three score and ten, having shown himself a master in three arts, was yet strong enough to undertake the task of finishing the greatest church in the world, and to work at it almost a score of years longer? The thought of brave, powerful, old Michael Angelo means far more to me than that of a thousand clever but weak boys who die because their bodies are not strong enough for their minds.

"You would not find it easy, if you were talking to your children," the Doctor went on, with a shrewd little smile, "to convince some of them that they had not so much genius that it was necessary for them to cultivate it at the expense of their health. You need not look so indignant! I don't deny they are nice girls and boys; but when we are young, we all feel as if we were wonderful creatures, and it is n't until after the world has knocked us about a great deal that we find that we are not the precious eight-sided diamond crystals, but just soft pebbles that after a while

are so like the other pebbles as not to be distinguished from them by a careless observer."

"That 's rather discouraging, is n't it?"

"Well, I don't think so," said the Doctor, cheerfully. "We should only find enough to keep us busy if we were great geniuses, and we can all do that, and whatever we are, all that this world gives us is a chance to make the best of ourselves, but it never fails to give us that. However, what you and your children want is every-day advice, and not my middle-aged reflections, and so you must tell them to take care of their bodies, and if they don't remember it the first time or the second, you must keep on telling. If they take the advice, there won't be so much need of doctors, but I am afraid that the sick will not disappear from the earth in my time."

Now has any boy or girl anything to say to that?

POLITICS.

THE girls who make up little faces at reading the heading of this Chat are perhaps excusable, but how is it with you, boys? What are politics? What does the big Worcester say?

POLITICS. n. 1. The science or the art of government, or the administration of national or public affairs; that part of ethics which consists in the knowledge or the practice of conducting the various affairs of a state or nation; political science; political economy.

2. Political or public affairs, or the conduct and contention of political parties.

The first definition sounds pretty well, does it not? It seems to be something about which a very noble man might honorably busy himself. But you have rather thought of politics as "the conduct and contention of political parties;" and, having noticed that men grow angry and coarse and rough when discussing party matters, and that election days, when politics are supposed to be in the ascendant, are very disagreeable, you have learned to dislike the word. Please notice, however, that the whole of the second definition of Worcester hangs on a right understanding of the first, and of the meaning of the word political,

which is derived from politics, and then, perhaps, you will see that a knowledge of this subject is very necessary to you. And you, girls, remember that the welfare of the country and of the women in it depends upon the way in which the men manage its politics, just as the welfare of the men depends upon the way that the women manage their homes.

"Where can we study politics?" ask the boys. "It is n't a school study."

Is n't? Did n't you, this very morning, recite a long story about George III., and the way in which thirteen colonies were oppressed by him until they declared themselves independent? and did n't you, when you had finished the story, say that it showed that tyranny was unprofitable to sovereigns? Did n't that give you one fact in the science of governing — one rule in the art of governing for you to remember if you should ever be made king of any country? That is n't likely, you say. No; but when you grow up, you will be one of the sovereigns of America, for every citizen of the United States who votes is one of the rulers of the country.

"Is there any place except in the history books for us to study politics?"

Yes; in the letters and speeches and in the lives of the great men who have ruled their fellow-

beings since the foundation of the world; in the files of State papers and treaties, in libraries, in constitutions and acts of federation, and in laws; and in the monuments and ruined palaces that races of which there is no record have left behind them. From all of these sources you may learn something of the art of government, and be sure that, no matter how long you live, there will be something in it that you will not understand. It is not one of those trifling bits of knowledge that you can master and leave, and go on to study something else, but a work for a lifetime. Now it is not to be expected that many of you will take up politics as a profession, and Our Tender would be rather sorry to see many of you do so; for where one succeeds a hundred fail, and he who wins the truest success, he who does the most for his country and for the cause of right, is often the most bitterly reviled and the most fiercely hated of her citizens. He who strives to rule men for their own good and to lead them in the best ways has a thankless task, and often treads his lonely path unsustained by any encouragement except the consciousness of his own rectitude. This is especially the case in a republic, in which everybody can speak his mind, and every public man is liable to have his plans thwarted by premature and ignorant criticism. It is to correct this state of

affairs, to make yourselves able to understand the conduct of those in authority and the relations of the rulers and the ruled, and of different nations to each other, that Our Tender urges you to study politics. When the majority of the citizens are well informed, the best men will no longer walk apart in loneliness, but will be sure of sympathy in all their grand projects for the good of the nation and of the world.

Learn all that you can, then, about the Constitution. Learn it by heart, if need be, and then you will not be easily led away by that cuckoo-cry of "unconstitutional," which seems to form the whole vocabulary of some writers. When you have done that, try and trace the effects of the remarkable clauses and amendments; and then when a man tells you that somebody who proposes a new measure means mischief, you will know whether or not to believe him, by remembering the history of similar measures in the past. Read the newspapers also, intelligently comparing one with another and deciding between them; and when you find one that seems wilfully to misrepresent for the sake of supporting its party, note it and mistrust it. When you find one which says one thing in its editorial columns and another in its "interviews" or "specials," note that, too, and study it; for in that way you may

learn the policy of the party opposed to your own, but do not allow yourselves to be led by anything which that paper says. When you find a paper ostentatiously proclaiming itself "independent," and fighting now on this side and now on that, avoid it altogether. There is nothing to be learned from it, and it has caprice, not principle, for a guide; and you must take principle for yours. You must not be half-hearted in politics. The smallest, humblest man represents a thread in the great cable of the national life, and if it prove weak in the hour of trial, the strands may be frayed and may part in the strain. If you allow yourselves to remain ignorant of the laws under which you live, of the men whom you elect to add to them, to execute them, and to appoint others to administer them, or if you allow yourself to be deceived about them, you are the weak thread; and, just so far as you are weak, you are criminal. If you do not want the responsibility, if you do not want to study and think and act for yourself, go and hunt up a despot to govern you and look out for your interests, — after he has carefully secured his own, — but do not wrong a republic by staying in it.

Really, from asking you to study politics, Our Tender has come to telling that you must, has she not, boys? Perhaps when you have studied

a little while, and have seen what comes from ignorance of the topic, you will be more earnest than she is about it.

You must begin now, and not next year, to learn about it. You cannot step into a knowledge of history, and your freedom suit, and your right of suffrage, all at once. Remember that patriotism is one of the highest duties, and that an ignorant patriot never existed. A man does not die bravely or live nobly without a cause, and what inspiration can he have to love his country, if he know nothing of the history of her laws? His blind attachment to her soil is not love of her, but of himself, his memories, and his associations. He must know her as she is to love her, and to sacrifice himself for her. It may be his only bit of wisdom, but it will glorify his life; and, if he should have no other way of serving her than of voting judiciously whenever he had an opportunity, he would do his duty, and would show himself her faithful son as well as if he died in battle for her. The soldiers' day comes only now and then; the citizens' recurs with each rising sun, and has its regular duty, and the good citizen is the true patriot.

CONVERSATION.

"ENTERTAINING is very hard work," said Mollie, as she sat on the sofa and fanned herself, and looked as exhausted as a small girl can, when brown as a nut with the mountain breezes and the summer sun.

"So it is," replied Bessie, with great sympathy; for she too had been "entertaining" the three ladies who had called in mamma's absence.

"You might say something when you speak," rejoined Mollie, with a gentleness that removed the sharpness from her words; "those were mamma's friends, and of course they were nice ladies, but they said nothing but 'So it is,' and 'Is that so?' and 'Do you think so?' the whole time that they were here; and I do think that you might be nice, and say something, now, Bess, if you really mean to converse."

"My! what a big word," Bess rejoined, with perfect heartlessness. "Let's go up into the woods."

Away they went, leaving "entertaining" behind them, and also leaving a thought or two with Our Tender, who heard them. Isn't it rather uncivil, dear girls and boys, to behave so that one's host or hostess finds "entertaining" hard

work? To sit and merely echo her remarks, saying, "Yes, it is a fine day," when she says, "It is a fine day," and throwing the whole burden of originating ideas upon her? Now this is almost an exact report of the conversation that poor little Mollie had been obliged to endure.

Mollie. I am glad to see you Mrs. —— and Mrs. ——, but mamma is out.

First Lady. Oh, your ma is out.

Mollie. Yes'm. She will be sorry that she did not see you. Won't you sit down? (*They sit and say nothing.*) Have you been here long?

Second Lady. Two days.

Mollie. We have been here ten weeks. We like it very much.

First Lady. Oh, you like it very much.

Mollie. My baby sister is growing fat. They say it is the mountain air.

First Lady. Oh, she is growing fat, is she?

Mollie. Did you bring your little girls?

Second Lady. No.

Mollie. Are you enjoying yourselves?

Second Lady. Yes.

Mollie. Shall you stay long?

Second Lady. Two weeks.

Mollie. Mamma will call on you as soon as she can. I shall tell her that you called.

(*A deadly pause, during which Mollie's fan flies*

nervously, and those of the guests wag back and forth, back and forth, as placidly as pendulums, and then Mollie asks desperately), —

Was it very warm in the city when you came away?

First Lady. Yes, pretty warm.

Second Lady. Well, not so very.

Third Lady. Well, now, I don't think it was warm at all.

First Lady. You don't?

Third Lady. No, I don't.

Mollie. Some of the gentlemen keep a record of the city temperature, "for coolness," they say.

First Lady. Is that so?

Mollie. Shall you do much mountain climbing while you are here?

Second Lady. I don't know.

Mollie. We enjoy it very much.

First Lady. Oh! you enjoy it very much.

Mollie. I hope you will like it.

Second Lady. Thank you.

Bessie. Have you had your photographs taken yet?

Second Lady. No.

Bessie. We had ours. Would you like to see them?

Second Lady. Yes.

(*A pause, during which photographs are examined and returned with the remark*, "*Very nice.*")

Mollie. We think that the baby's picture is very good.

Second Lady. Do you?

First Lady. It is.

Third Lady. I never saw the baby.

(*Mollie gives the baby's history in full, despairing of finding anything about which her visitors will talk. A pause.*)

Mollie. Is your husband coming up, ma'am?

First Lady. No. Perhaps we would better go now.

Second Lady. Yes.

Third Lady. Good-by, my dear. Tell your mother we were sorry not to see her.

Second Lady. Yes, do.

First Lady. Yes.

Chorus. Good-by.

Do you wonder that Mollie was tired? It is not often that grown women talk quite so stupidly as this when they go to make a call, but when they meet in the horse-cars, or in any place in which no topic is prepared for conversation, they are often almost as dull of speech, and so are little girls. Mollie's mamma found, when she looked at the ladies' cards that she did not know them, and that they were only persons who had called upon her by way of civility, and so, when Mollie spoke of their odd silence, she gave her a little lecture on conversing.

"You see," Mamma said, "it is n't enough to utter some words in response to a remark; you must really answer; you must try to present an idea of your own; and then, too, you must make an opening for a reply. With friends you do this unconsciously, but with persons whom you do not know, an effort is necessary, and you must make it, if you would have your guests comfortable. You did your best with your visitors of to-day, but the only thing to do with silent persons like them is to talk a great deal, making rather long speeches. If 'gushing,' as the boys call it, be ever allowable, it is with ladies of that kind. It puts them at ease, and in time they talk a little, and you often find them very agreeable when you become acquainted with them."

Mamma was right. Are any of the older girls blushing a little as they remember talks in which they were almost as careless of others' comfort as Mollie's ladies? Absolute silence is no worse than words which say nothing.

Why does n't Our Tender talk to the boys? Because they do not often satisfy themselves with saying nothing, and seldom echo what is said to them. Repetition is a girl's trick, and is unknown to their brothers.

"It 's lack of honesty that 's at the bottom of it," says the Poet. "The person who repeats is

trying to hide his dulness, and that is dishonest. It 's silly, too," he adds; "anybody has a right to be dull," and then he looks defiant, as he always does when he has uttered a paradox. What do you say to that, young ladies who echo?

PIRATES.

Left, right! left, right! through the hall. Bang, bang! on Our Tender's sitting-room door, and enter Master Johnny, aged ten, and Master Johnny's bosom friends, terrible to behold in paper hats of ferocious brim; red sashes that have a suspicious resemblance to the girls' nubias, and broomsticks cut down to the proper length for doing duty as swords. Our Tender gazes with a rapt and dazzled stare at this martial array, and waits for an explanation.

"We are pirates," says Johnny, with solemnity. "We are pirates," growl his two friends, shaking their sash ends, touching their swords, and cocking their hats more fiercely.

"Ah, and what cowardly thing are you going to do now?"

"We do no cowardly things," replies the chief of the marauding band. "We — we kill folks."

"Unarmed women, for instance?" asks Our Tender.

"We take our victims wherever we find them," declares Pirate Number Two. "We burn, slaughter, or drown them, as fancy wills."

"Very good, and very brave when you are three to one. It is quite like pirates, though, and I congratulate you on assuming the part so well. Still it seems cowardly to me, and so very cowardly that I object to your playing at being pirates, unless in a game in which you are well beaten by honest men."

Johnny's eyes grew round, and his playmates looked astonished, but being invited to give their impressions as to what a pirate really was, stated in substance that he was a manly creature, six feet tall, who killed a hundred men, more or less, every year, never showed pity for any human creature, wore garments profusely trimmed with gold lace, was very handsome, had chests full of gems and gold, never did any work, and was admired by everybody who was not afraid of him. A little more questioning brought out the fact that all this knowledge of pirates was derived from certain ragged story books in the possession of a class of persons designated as "the fellows," and that the little circumstance that most of the pirates that ever existed died a

shameful death was unaccountably omitted from these books.

Our Tender sent the boys to take off their piratical equipment, gave them a lunch of gingerbread to keep them from asking too many questions, and then read them a little tale called

THE TRUE STORY OF A PIRATE.

When I was about fifteen years old I became tired of working at school, and ran away to sea to have an easy time, but found that I had to work harder on board ship than I ever did at home, and soon became sick of my bargain. I was so ill-tempered that all my shipmates discerned my frame of mind, and one of them told me of a plot for killing the captain and stealing the vessel, in order to go to strange lands where nobody works for a living; and one dark night we armed ourselves to the teeth, killed the captain and officers while they were sleeping, and sailed away to the Spanish Main.

("That 's where they all go," cried one of the boys with a little kick of ecstasy; but neither he nor the other two had any idea of where the Spanish Main was, and had to be told that it was the southern part of the Caribbean Sea, and was so called because it was traversed by the Spanish treasure-ships on their way from Mexico, the West

India Islands, and South America to Europe, and the young ignoramuses looked rather meek for pirates after that, and listened without remark.)

We captured several rich vessels, always by lying in some way; sometimes we pretended to be peaceful traders, and when our prey was close to us, opened fire on them with concealed cannon; sometimes we came upon the vessels in the night, and swarmed noiselessly up the side to kill every one whom we met; sometimes we made signals of distress, and when a boat was sent out to us, we murdered every man in it and then attacked the ship whence it came and captured her. Meanwhile, we fought much among ourselves, for no one of us could trust the rest, and each mistrusted and envied the others. We were surrounded by enemies day and night, and knew no peace. We had fine clothes and rich food, but we could only wear the one on board our own ship, and the other did not taste good after a while. Our life was stupid in spite of its danger, for it had little variety, and although I had learned to love the sea, I longed for our own land, to which we could not venture for fear of being hung, and most of us drank to drown thought, and grew more stupid still. The strange countries that we saw did not interest us after a time, and we went on doing one evil action after an-

other, and finding that none of them pleased us after they were done, and the days were so long sometimes, that we almost wished to be captured for the sake of the change.

"Is that all?" asked the boys.

"That 's all," said Our Tender. "The person whose story I have condensed into this little tale was captured and hung in due time, and the whole substance of his confessions was that he had been a coward and had not enjoyed it. You 'll find the same thing in every pirate's story, if you read it, instead of skimming it, and you won't find anything worth imitating in their deeds. I can understand your liking to play soldiers, but pirates were so mean and ignoble that it would appear more natural for you to despise them. Now and then you may read of one who did what seems like a good action or two, but you must remember that the money that they gave in charity was always stolen, and that when one opposed any wickedness of his companions they seldom failed to punish him for it in some mean, treacherous way."

"I shan't be a pirate any more," said Johnny, with decision. "What would you be? Would you be an Antique and Horrible, or what?"

"I shall just be a boy," answered one of the others, "and I 'm going to read about somebody

that was brave, and not about folks that wore good clothes and pretended to be brave. No more pirates for me!"

"And no more robbers or brigands?" asked Our Tender. "A land pirate is as bad as any other."

"No, none of 'em," said the little fellow, and the three trotted off and played circus the rest of the day. As they did not break any bones, Our Tender was content, but she would like to know if any of her boys have been mistaking the nature of a pirate as Johnny and his friends did.

A MEAN MAN.

"But you know he 's such a mean, old creature," said Lucius.

"And so ignorant," said Lucia.

"And stupid and overbearing."

"And unkind whenever he has the smallest chance."

"How can we think of minding him perhaps all our lives! Of being his slaves!" cried Lucius, and then they both looked at Our Tender.

It was hard for them. They were two very

nice children, twins, whose widowed mother had reared them as carefully as she could, but had been compelled, when they were sixteen years old, to send them out to earn their living, and both had found places in a large shop, kept by the man whom they described so emphatically. The outside, careless world called him by very different names, styled him benevolent, public-spirited, kind-hearted and good, for he was sly and shrewd, and knew how to buy fair words, and even honest fair opinion when it could be of any value to him; but those whom he employed saw him as he was, and, but for the risk of starving, many a high-spirited boy, many a sensitive girl, who entered his shop would have left it in a week; but places are few, and the struggle for life is hard, and so the poor things stayed, and, accepting the meagre wages which he proffered, with the remark that he could hire plenty of hands at that rate, were outwardly respectful and inwardly rebellious.

"I would n't mind working hard and early and late for a man who ever seemed to know that you were n't an old machine," said Lucius, "and I don't know that I could n't stand even hardness, if my employer were a person whom I could respect; but really, without conceit, I know that in everything but his money-making power that man

is my inferior, and only fancy being tied all my life to minding him!"

"If only we could have afforded the time to learn trades!" sighed Lucia.

"Well, we could n't," her brother answered, "but that is n't it. I don't pine about being set to work at something that will never give me high wages, or at something that I don't like. Mother did the best that she could for us, and that 's all right; it is this man's abominable character, and the impossibility of feeling any respect for him when he is in authority over us, that troubles me. It does n't seem right to mind him, although he has not asked us to do anything wrong. If he ever should, of course, we shall have to leave, and sha'n't I enjoy saying a few things to him?"

"That 's not right," said Lucia rather primly.

"I know that," replied Lucius, "but a very, very little imagining what I should do is n't very wrong. Oh! how can I obey that man for years and years! Could you, ma'am?"

Our Tender owned that she did not believe that she could, for no frank woman can imagine herself simulating respect which she does not feel, and to her the trouble of her young friends seemed very hard to bear. They had been reared to reverence and admire good things, and it was a great strain upon their minds to seem to respect

any thing or any person not good, and they had not learned to distinguish between simple obedience in indifferent matters and the loving obedience which they rendered to their mother, because she was their mother, and was always right and wise. There is always a way out of every trouble, you know; and it seemed to Our Tender that perhaps these young folks could find it in the "De Imitatione Christi," and she gave it to Lucius, open at a passage which he read aloud, slowly: —

"Do not say 'I cannot endure to suffer these things at the hands of such an one, nor ought I to endure things of this sort; for he hath done me great wrong, and reproacheth me with things which I never thought of; but of another I will willingly suffer, that is, if they are things which I shall see that I ought to suffer.'"

"That is just like us," Lucia said ruefully.

"Such a thought is foolish," Lucius read on; "it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it will be to be crowned; but, rather, weigheth too exactly the persons, and the injuries offered to itself. He is not truly patient who is willing to suffer only so much as he thinks good, and from whom he pleases. But the truly patient man minds not by whom he is exercised, whether by his superiors, or by one of his equals or by an

inferior; whether by a good man or by one that is perverse and unworthy."

"I don't think I ever really thought what patience was before," said Lucia. "I call myself patient when I don't make a fuss; but that kind of patience must be the sort that the Sisters have at the Protectory or at St. Vincent. They do not mind whether it is the children who tease them, or some pert old lady who gives them advice because she means to give them some money some time, or who it is that tries to vex them. But I can't be so good as they!"

"There 's the reason why they can be," said Lucius, pointing to the next passage, and the two silently read, —

"But indifferently from every creature, how much soever or how often soever anything adverse befall him, he takes it all thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteems it great gain; for with God, it is impossible that anything, how small soever, if only it be suffered for God's sake, shall pass without its reward."

"That will make things easier," Lucia said, softly, "if only we can remember it."

"And here is this, further on," Lucius cried. "Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. . . . If thou desire to be crowned, fight manfully, endure patiently." "I

think, ma'am, that by taking it as a fight, I shall do best," he said. "But I am glad to see this, and I 'm going to read it often," and before he went away he noted the passage so as to learn it, "and to say it to myself when the old gentleman is especially — characteristic," he said, with a laugh, and then the two went away looking a shade happier, and leaving Our Tender to write out their story for her girls and boys, some of whom she knows are in the same shop with the twins, and many of whom she fears are almost as unpleasantly situated. Patience, little ones, will take you through it all; fighting patience, not lazy patience.

THE NAUGHTIEST BOY THAT EVER WAS SEEN.

"My mother says that I am the naughtiest boy that ever was seen," said a boy of eleven to Our Tender the other day, looking as happy and jubilant as if he were repeating a compliment or some praise of which he could not be aught but proud. There was a time when such a speech, spoken with such a face, would have confused her, between pity for the child's mother and com-

miseration for him for being told of his faults so plainly; but that time was over long ago, and she recognized "the naughtiest boy that ever was seen" as one of the beautiful results of reading books about naughty children, and so she looked at him with indifference, mingled with thankfulness that he was not akin to her, and that she was in no way responsible for his naughtiness. Her coldness did not trouble the boy, however; it requires something extraordinary to produce the faintest effect on a child like him, and he soon went on to say, in an injured tone, "I don't mean to do anything wrong, though."

"You are simply unfortunate," rejoined Our Tender, in a manner meant to be sarcastic, but accepted as sympathetic.

"That 's what I tell my father," cried the young gentleman; "but he punishes me just the same, and says that misfortune is a bad habit for me to acquire, and that he shall do his best to cure me of it."

No answer from Our Tender.

"Such funny things happen to me," the boy continued. "Ladies laugh when I tell about them, and say 'I 'm the queerest boy!'"

Still no answer.

"I 'll tell you some of the things, if you like."

"As you please," answered she, not "liking,"

and feeling certain that she should not be able to refrain from telling the boy her opinion of the "funny things."

"My mother cries over them, sometimes," the boy said musingly; "she does n't seem to see the fun in them."

Our Tender could imagine that she did not, for his mother is a delicate little lady, scarcely taller than he, and quite unfitted, by long sickness, to see the "fun" in her boy's performances. No wonder that, in despair, she calls him "the naughtiest boy that ever was seen."

"You know," he went on, with a smile, not allowing his spirits to be damped by the memory of his mother's tears. "I think of things. Now the other day I saw our cat come stepping down the trellis, and as she stretched herself out in her funny way, I thought that she would look nice in Cousin Cora's doll's frock, and so, while Cora was taking her music lesson, I dressed Miss Puss. She looked nice in the frock, but after I put the bonnet on! Oh, dear me! How she did look! I wanted to carry her into the parlor for the music-teacher to see, but while I was taking her through the entry, and she was mewing as if somebody were killing her, Rover came along, and she was so frightened that she jumped out of my arms and ran up stairs, frock, bonnet, and all,

and Rover did n't quite guess what she was, on account of her clothes, and he looked at me as if he wanted to say, 'What kind of a doll is that?' but when she began to mew again, he ran up stairs too, and she came down the back stairs and ran up the newel-post; and then when he barked at her, she jumped right through the glass in the parlor door, and scared Cora and the music-teacher. And then Cousin Mary called me a cruel, wicked, careless boy, and the music-teacher said that I was a Goth, and they all cried, 'Wait until your father comes home!' just because I wanted to have a little fun with the cat! Was n't it queer?"

"Did your father think so?" inquired Our Tender.

"Well, no." He said, 'William Henry, this kind of thing has ceased to be amusing. You are too old to be one of the funny children in the books;' and he punished me, and forbade me to touch the cat for a year, or to go into the parlor for a fortnight, or to touch Cora's doll again. I told him that I did n't mean to do anything wrong, but he said, 'That makes no great difference!' You ought to hear Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown laugh about that cat! They 've made me tell them the story twice, and they will ask me to tell it two or three times more; they always do.

When I pasted pictures on the parlor wall, they made me tell them about it eight times, and laughed every time! I wish I had a little sister," added the boy pensively. "Boys that have little sisters can enjoy themselves ever so much more. I read about a boy who had a little sister, and gave her the mucilage bottle to play with, and oh! how funny it was!"

"Spoiled all her pretty clothes, did n't it?"

"Yes, and stuck her fingers together, and made her hair so stiff that she had to have it cut off. Such fun!"

"Very amusing for her mother to have her little daughter's clothes spoiled, and to see her little head cropped, I suppose," said Our Tender.

"And such a time as they had prying her fingers apart," said William Henry.

Then Our Tender looked straight into his eyes, and, said she, "William Henry, I don't see why, if you grow up, you should not become a Jesse James, or something of that sort. You seem already to take the same gentle delight in suffering that characterized him, and if you keep on you may come to enjoy murders as he did."

"I don't enjoy suffering," said William Henry. "I like fun, but —"

"Would it be fun to you to have your hair pulled as the baby's was when they tried to wash

the mucilage off? Would it be fun to you to have a big giant catch you, and dress you in queer clothes that hurt you, and hindered you from moving, as the doll's clothes hurt and hindered the cat? Would you like, while trying to learn how to make music, to have a cat come crashing into the room and frighten you, so that you would dream of it for a week? You like the noise of your jokes; you like to see the queer sights that owe their origin to you, but you don't think about other persons. No more did Jesse James when he shot a man."

"Nobody laughed at Jesse James," said William Henry, "and a great many persons laugh at me."

"A great many silly persons admired him," said Our Tender, "exactly as you admire the little boys who do queer things in the story-books, and as Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Smith seem to admire you; but that does not make Jesse, the little boys, nor you any better. The trouble with you, William Henry, is that you read your funny books and the funny stories in the papers, and allow yourself to be blinded by the amusing way in which matters are put. There is no real humor in the things, but the phrases sound humorous, and that is enough for you. As for the funny children, I pity their fathers and mothers, as I

pity yours, my boy. What peace or comfort do you suppose that anybody can have when any moment something absurd or painful is likely to be brought about by the caprice of a child. I don't blame you half so much as I do the persons who let you read the books without explaining them to you."

"Mrs. Smith lent me two or three," interrupted William Henry,

"And was n't what your father said to you about the cat enough to show you what he thought of them? There is nothing more pleasant to behold than the innocent gambols of an innocent child, as sportive as a kitten, but far more intelligent; but no child old enough to know that mucilage was sticky ever gave a bottle of it to a baby in innocence; no child old enough to dress a cat in a doll's frock ever did it without knowing that he would scare the cat and spoil the frock. No boy ever was silly enough to think that his mother wanted newspaper pictures pasted on the parlor wall, after he was old enough to paste them there. And, William Henry, no boy ever read a book in which the freaks of such a boy were recorded, without seeing that they were wrong, and knowing in his inmost soul that, when he resolved on imitating them, he resolved on doing something wrong. Own up, now; in spite of all your

talk about 'fun,' did n't you see that the story-book boys were naughty, no more, no less, and needed punishment just as you do when your father gives it to you?"

"Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown laughed," said William Henry in a low tone.

"And would you rather make them laugh, or refrain from making your mother cry, my boy? If either of those ladies suffered from your naughtiness, if you pasted your pictures on their parlor walls, scared their cats into spoiling their parlor doors, do you think that they would laugh? Are n't you old enough to care for something better than making mere acquaintances laugh?"

Well, William Henry cried, and then, of course, there was nothing to do but to pet and soothe him, and point out to him that after all he was only a little boy, and had plenty of time before him in which to do good and sensible things; but how is it with you, Our Tender's older boys and girls? When you read about these mischievous children who are so fashionable as heroes and heroines, do you do it with your eyes open or shut; and when you talk of them and their pranks to younger children, how do you do it? Your influence is very great with those a few years younger than yourselves. One clever girl, one high minded boy, can often influence a whole class, even a

whole school; and an elder sister often governs a child's life almost as much as its father or mother. Won't you see to it that your influence is cast in the scale against mischievous "fun?"

SCHOOLGIRL TROUBLES.

THE Schoolgirl made up a little face the other evening when she came in to see Our Tender, and found the Poet, the Doctor, and the Lawyer seated, if not "all in a row," all so that they could see her, hear every word that she said, and quite spoil her opportunity to confide in Our Tender, and the Lawyer, who has not watched juries without learning something, detected her at once, although it was "the littlest bit of a face," according to her.

"I 'll go away," he said sweetly. "We 'll all go away. The young lady does not want us, brethren, let us depart immediately."

"Please sit *still*," the Schoolgirl cried, talking in italics, as she always does, except at recitations. "I 'll go away *myself*, if you make fun of me. I only wanted to show Our Tender some *things*."

"That means new bonnets," said the Poet. "Have you left bandboxes in the hall?"

"It may mean Christmas slippers at this season," rejoined the Doctor, "and I detect a symptom. A small shred of scarlet worsted peeps from the patient's pocket."

"But it does n't indicate slippers," said she; "It indicates slips only, newspaper slips, and I 've such a *lot* of them, tied up in that bit of worsted. *There* and *there* and *there*," and she brought out one after the other, long strips of newspapers, and gave each of us one, reserving several "for a second dose, if the first should not be effectual," as she told the Doctor.

The first dose was effectual with the Poet. He read his slip through, and laid it down, and gave his young friend a beautiful little discourse, in which he told her what an injured being she was, in not being allowed to roam the woods all day, and what a shame it was that she should be cabined, cribbed, confined with books, and what a happy creature a savage was, and the dear little girl sat and heard it all, and said, "Oh! my, that is better than the editorial articles! I *wish* my teacher could hear it."

"I wish she could," said the Poet. "It would be such an encouragement to her in her work of

carrying out her contract with the school committee, and teaching you exactly as they bid her to teach you. It would be delighful for her to know that these editors think that she is a heartless creature, and that I say that you should be in the woods."

"Well, why do they all call the teachers cruel?" she asked.

"Because some of them don't know, and some of them don't care," answered the Doctor, speaking for the Poet. "Give me the rest of these things; my constitution is strong, Oh, yes! the old story! tired girls! books taken home every evening! pale, sickly, feeble! no strength for anything! no time for anything if they had the strength. I know the whole tale from end to end."

"Well, is n't it a *shame?*" asked the Schoolgirl. "Sometimes I have to get up at *five* o'clock to study, and sometimes I have to *sit up* until eleven, and I am not *nearly* so strong as I was a few years ago."

"Don't have any strength to enjoy an evening's amusement when you get it, do you?" asked the Doctor, with apparent sympathy.

"No. I was at the theatre twice last week, and was so tired when I came home that it seemed as if I should *drop*, and I spent one even-

ing at a *friend's*, and really I thought I should go to *sleep*."

"Very sad. You are overworked. When do you get time for your shopping and your dressmaker?"

"Oh, somehow, in between the other things. You have to hunt so to match things, and I can't trust my mother to do my shopping. She is n't careful about shades."

The Doctor said nothing, but he looked so much that she asked, "What is it?"

"The old story, as I told you," he answered. "I 've heard it half a hundred, yes, half a thousand times. You are overworked by your studies, and yet you sit up late three evenings in the week for matters which have nothing to do with your school, and I venture to say that two afternoons out of six you spend in the shops. Mothers come to me every week and say, 'What medicine shall I give my daughter? Shall I send her to the gymnasium? Shall I make her walk five miles a day?' They never ask, 'Shall I compel her to stick to her studies, and keep her out of society, away from the theatre, away from shops in which she may learn all manner of extravagance before she knows the value of money? Shall I keep her a schoolgirl while she is in school, instead of trying to make her do the work of a woman of society

while studying?' Now, honestly, my child, how many hours have you studied out of school to-day?"

"One," she answered, after a little thought. "I called on a classmate this afternoon, and read these things over, and talked about them, and then I studied an hour before I came over here."

"Lessons ready for to-morrow?"

"Yes, sir."

"And your school session is five hours, with half an hour for luncheon, and another half hour for singing, vocal exercises, and calisthenics, — things that cannot tax your brain much. That is just five hours of work for you to-day; no very hard task. Still if you arose at six, you — excuse me — ought to be abed at nine."

"But one *must* go out," she remonstrated.

"By no means. While you are a schoolgirl, you should not go to the theatre except in vacation, and the parties which you and your mates give to each other should take place in the afternoon and early evening, and should occur very seldom. Your dress ought not to occupy two afternoons of your week, but should be a matter of small consequence. It is less outside work that you need, not less school work."

"You don't have very much school work compared with French, German, Austrian, or English

schoolgirls," said the Poet. "You ought to see the lists of things which they learn."

"But they don't shop, nor go to theatres, nor to evening parties," said the Doctor.

"Say something for me," said the Schoolgirl, turning to Our Tender, "I can't make myself different from the other girls."

"Not very easily," Our Tender answered; "but could n't you trust your mother to do your shopping, for one thing? That would give you some time, and could n't you stay away from the theatre?"

"Yes; but our lessons are too long, *really*. It 's hard to remember them, and our teacher expects us to know lessons that we had months ago as well as those that we had yesterday. She says that we ought to review them ourselves. I have bad headaches, and so do *lots* of the girls."

"My dear young lady," said the Lawyer, "allow me to tell you that there is no law compelling you to go to school. You are past the age up to which your parents could be compelled to send you to school a certain part of the year."

"Well, what — what of it?" asked the Schoolgirl, looking puzzled.

"Oh, nothing," he answered. "I judged from your way of speaking that you fancied that you must go to school and endure whatever hardship

befell you there. Now, in reality, you may leave to-morrow. The schools are not meant for invalids, but for healthy children, children worth the expenditure of the school fund, children likely to grow up into good strong citizens."

"But I don't want to be ignorant," she said gravely.

"Then you must give the time to study," said the Poet. "You must pay the price for everything, learning as well as articles to be bought in the shops."

"You are all against me," she said.

"No," Our Tender answered; "not one of us is against you. We are all for you, and against your mistakes, my dear. In your case the remedy is in your own hands. You were not, as many children are, overworked when in the primary school by music lessons and dancing lessons and little girls' parties. Your mother did not teach you to neglect your lessons or to complain of your teaching by making your outside duties and pleasures so numerous that you had no time for school work. It is only since you began to call yourself a young lady that you have been overtasked, and she has probably allowed you to have your own way just for the sake of letting you see the folly of it. You could learn your lessons easily enough, if you went back to your old plan of life while you were

a grammar-school scholar, went to bed early, walked part of the afternoon and studied the rest. You would lose nothing by not visiting much, for you have time enough for that in vacation, and time enough for talk at recess and in going to school and returning."

"But it would be so *dull!*"

"Dull, with time to study!" exclaimed the Poet.

"Dull, with perfect health!" cried the Doctor.

"Don't stay if you find it dull," persisted the Lawyer. "Leave. Nobody will stop you. There are girls who can stay and keep up with the classes, and it is not worth while to educate persons who find the acquirement of knowledge dull!"

But the Schoolgirl gathered up her newspaper slips and went away content with her discontent, and the Poet and the Lawyer and the Doctor discussed her and the schools, and confirmed themselves in their opinion that it is home government, and not school discipline, that weakens the schoolgirl, and that the excitement about their studies injures more than it benefits them.

READING A NEWSPAPER.

She was a young lady of the kind known as "superior," and there are not many things in this world to which she did not seem superior, as she smiled at the Editor, and said, "We do not use a 'reader' at our school; we read from the newspaper."

"Well," he said, casting about in his mind for something that would be true and would not be uncomplimentary, "You might do worse."

"It is very much easier than a 'reader,'" the young lady went on, "because, of course, there are no fine passages to which one needs to give much expression, and one learns a great deal, you know."

"Um-m," the Editor answered; "Oh, yes, of course. What do you think of the Egyptian question, my dear?"

"The E-g-y-p," faltered the young lady, to the wicked delight of the Editor, who promptly answered, "Why, yes, and the Porte and Bismarck, and the plans against France, and Arabi Pasha, and the Suez Canal, and all the other matters connected with the present trouble. Of course you've read about them all."

"I saw something about some of those things

in the telegraph columns," the young lady replied, "but we did not read them."

"Perhaps you were more interested in Mr. Parnell."

"We have read something about him two or three times, but I don't know just what it was. Is it the same Parnell who was here?"

The Editor did not answer, but inquired if she thought the naval appropriation would be as large as it should be; if the damage from the Missouri floods and the Iowa hurricane would seriously affect Western prosperity, and if the Chili-Peru trouble would ever be settled.

"But we have not read about all these matters," she said.

"I thought that you were learning a great deal," the Editor rejoined with meekness, "and these are some of the most important current questions."

"We generally read the book reviews and the literary parts of the paper," the young lady said with dignity. "We aim at improvement, not at gossip."

"Gossip," growled the Editor with what breath he had left. "Do you call questions which may plunge ten nations into warfare, 'gossip?'"

"Well," the young lady said, with her superiority very plainly in view, "these are but transitory

matters ; literature endures, and so we read that ;" and she went away, superiority and all, leaving the Editor to struggle with his old doubt as to whether or not nine persons out of ten knew how to read a newspaper, and whether or not it was worth while to make and print one. The girl was young, and not to blame for her foolishness ; but her teacher was old enough to know better ; and here she was rearing a whole class in the idea that book reviews and the "literary part" of a paper, that is to say the extracts from books, were the most important ! The Editor groaned, and then told the whole story to Our Tender, who consolingly assured him that it was nothing. "Why," she said, "I know hundreds, or less, who never read anything in the paper, but the city news and the fires and murders. There are thousands of women who would never know that Europe was not perfectly peaceable and happy from end to end, were it not for an assassination now and then. They read about those, but do not pretend to guess at their cause, and remember them, as 'those dreadful things.' You could not change their ways — not if you were to talk and write a thousand years. These children, who 'use the newspaper instead of a reader,' do sometimes learn to ask questions about what they see, but most of them take it as task work, just as

much as if it were a book, and do not trouble themselves about remembering anything in it. How should you direct them to read a paper, Mr. Editor?"

"Well, first," he said, mounting one of his hobbies, upon which he delights to ride, "they should know what paper it is. There are innumerable persons, I find, who do not know whether a paper is the Morning or the Evening, and, consequently, are not certain when it is published, and in which departments of news it is likely to be strong. A morning paper is generally best for congressional and parliamentary reports, for municipal news and for foreign matters, because there is more time to prepare it, and it need not be flung together in a hurry, as an evening paper almost always is. Then it is well to know something about the editor, because he may happen to be especially well informed on certain subjects, or to have certain prejudices, and the more you can find out about his staff the more sensibly you can judge of their work. Then again, it is best to know the politics of your paper. You need not stare! There are many persons who do not, and who read editorial articles which are really pleas, as if they were news, instead of regarding them as pieces of argument. When one knows these things, one is ready to read the paper intelli-

gently; and the first thing to look at is the table of contents, if it have one, and the second is the summary of news. If it have neither, the only thing to do is to begin at the first page and look it through to the last, resolutely skipping everything of which you have no need. An editor is obliged to try to please many persons, and if you waste your time on the things meant to please others, you must not blame him and say his paper is too big.

"Read the telegraphic news, always remembering that everything dated from Berlin may be contradicted the next day, the news from that quarter being controlled by certain absolutely unprincipled persons. Boys may well look over the financial and commercial departments, and girls, if they mean to be business women, might glance at them. Read the editorial articles next, skipping all those on subjects to which you are sure that you are indifferent, and read the selections from the editorial departments of other papers. Look at the headings of the book reviews, and if you see the name of any book on which you care for information, read what is said about it, and read the literary news. If there be anything about the doings of the city government, read that, and don't look at the local news."

"What!"

"Don't look at the local news. It doesn't interest you to hear about accidents which have happened to persons whom you never saw, and why should you care to read about them? Any matter of any consequence will be mentioned in the editorial columns, but those paragraphs about broken arms and runaway horses, and false alarms of fire are not worth the attention of a civilized creature. As a rule, don't read the poetry in a daily paper, unless there is some editorial allusion to it. Few dailies pay for poetry, and many publish stuff which ought to condemn its authors to punishment for life. If you cannot spare the time to read a daily paper properly, read a good weekly thoroughly, paying especial attention to the editorial matter and summaries of news, both foreign and domestic. That's all, ma'am."

"And the advertisements?" Our Tender asked.

"Oh, you can't help seeing those as you glance along the columns. There is no need of deliberately setting about reading them. You will see them, just as you will see the solid columns of a long speech or any other unusual matter which I have not mentioned, and will decide as you please about reading them. A newspaper differs as the days differ, and one cannot make an absolute rule about it. Twenty minutes is quite

time enough to devote to it, generally speaking, but when it contains anything important, two hours may not be too much. You can make it a means of improvement; or you can allow it, as too many men and women did while President Garfield lay dying, to transform you for the time into a bloodthirsty monster, gloating over the details of mortal agony. There is everything in it, as there is everything in life. You take your choice."

And which do you choose, boys and girls, who are beginning to read the newspaper?

OUT IN THE SNOW.

"It takes a snow-storm to bring out the character of boys," said the Doctor, as he came in the other day, after stopping in the entry to shake off the fragments of snow-balls still clinging to his overcoat. "I thought that I was pretty well acquainted with the little fellows of this neighborhood, but they 've shown themselves in a new light to-day. There 's young Jennings; he always seemed a good sort of boy; boisterous, perhaps, and not very eager to study, but perfectly unobjectionable;

the little scamp got a piece of 'old snow,' as the boys call it, ice, you know, as hard as flint, and almost as sharp, rolled it in soft snow, and was all ready to throw it at my horse, when his brother Ike caught him. Perfect lamb, Ike is, you know! Never seems inclined to do anything more forcible than to bleat remonstrance when the boys take his marbles away from him, or call him names, or give him the dull part in all the games, and generally earns his name of milksop. Ike lisped out, 'You than't throw that, William Jenningth,' and then somehow managed to upset 'William Jenningth,' in the snow and wash his face thoroughly. 'You mind your own affairs,' William cried, as soon as Ike allowed him to get up; 'she tried to kick me last spring.' There, you see, ma'am, was the whole story; my pretty good boy was a revengeful little wretch, and my silly, timid boy a redresser of wrong and a champion of weakness. Then watch a crowd of boys snowballing. See how one madly snatches up handfuls of white flakes, and barely presses them together at all before he flings them from him, to break into a white mist, hardly visible a yard away from him, and quite harmless to the slow, methodical youth who rolls up round balls that are firm, but not so hard as to injure anybody whom they strike, and hurls them carefully and regularly at his hasty

friend, playing all kinds of pranks with him, now knocking off his cap; now filling his ear with snow, and now lodging a ball just where some of it will melt and trickle down in a cold, cold stream, no matter how quickly it is dislodged. Do not the improvidence and caution of these two show plainly enough? Then there 's young Master Toogoodforanything, that exasperating boy who is always explaining his precious motives, and who remarked to me the other day, 'I always endeavor to be perfectly gentle-man-ly!' Is n't it the best of fun to see how the snow brings out his characteristics? Did n't I watch him the other morning? He came out of his house with an air that said, 'This is exceedingly trying weather to a person of dignity,' and he walked very properly and prettily over the sidewalk that his mother had paid William Jennings a quarter to clear, and then he stood and looked at the drifts in front of the next house, and seemed to feel that this kind of thing was insupportable, but as it was almost school time, he condescended to walk around the drift, taking very elegant steps and brushing the snow off very carefully as soon as he found himself on bare bricks again. And so he went on, making his way down street by a succession of dignified tacks, when, to my great delight, William Jennings burst out of his own house, floundered through the drifts

without any great ado, and catching sight of dear little Toogoodforanything, bore down upon him and fell into the biggest drift of all with him. 'I wish you to understand that I cawn-sider your cawn-duct highly imprawper,' Master Toogoodforanything cried, raising his voice to a yelp, though preserving his pretty drawl; but the only visible effect of his remark was to send Jennings into such fits of laughter that he had to lean against a tree-box for support. 'Your conduct has been det-ri-men-tal to my wearing apparel,' Toogoodforanything went on, and then, my dear madam, then you ought to have heard Jennings ask, 'Mean it 's spoilt your clothes, old fellow?' and you should have seen him once more roll the nice boy in the snow! I 'll forgive the little rascal for trying to throw ice at my horse, for the sake of that performance; for, although I am afraid that the essence of it was bullying, it was so very plainly what that little Miss Nancy needed.

"Then the snow shovelling! Does n't that bring out traits of character, too? Don't I know boys that steal away out of the back door, to earn pennies by clearing sidewalks, while their fathers clear their own? Don't I know feeble boys who can snow-ball all day, if they can find the chance, but cannot clear the drifts off a twenty-foot sidewalk? Don't I know boys who can open doors and carry

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shawls for girls, but who sit down contentedly and see the back yard heaped as high as the fence-top with snow, although they know that some woman will have to wade through it to reach the ash-barrel, and to hang out clothes? And don't I know other boys, plain, honest fellows, not always very bright in the class-room, not very agile in the play-ground, who not only clear their own side-walks bright and early, and shovel a good foot off the next door neighbors' sidewalks, and make nice paths in the back yard, but also clean some poor woman's sidewalk before they are off to earn a dime or two by hard work elsewhere? There are some nice boys among my friends, madam, as well as some naughty ones, you see! Don't I know some thoroughgoing fellows who sweep after they have shovelled, as well as some who leave little patches and lumps of snow in corners, and here and there among the bricks? Don't I know some daring little sinners, who beg to go out and clear the roof, and seem to long for a storm that will give them a chance to try their strength at throwing snow over the fence? I should n't know them half so well if it were not for the snow, however. The warm sunny days don't bring out their nature. It takes the snow!

"And the girls! Does n't every one of the lazy, candy-loving, stupid faction of them insist on

staying in the house, and don't all the clever, sensible ones walk out as freely as if there were no snow, and don't they look their prettiest as they grow rosy with the exertion of getting through the drifts, too —"

"And by shovelling?" asked Our Tender.

"Girls don't shovel snow in this country," answered the Doctor.

"In theory they do not," Our Tender rejoined, "and in reality I hope they do not, when any of my boys are standing by idle, but the truth is that I saw a girl shovelling snow the other day, and doing it extremely well, and — Doctor, there were three boys watching her from the other side of the street! Do you call that American chivalry? Were n't they nice boys?"

But you can't well corner the Doctor. "My dear madam," he replied, "they may have been very nice boys when they were young, but they must have had very bad mothers, and very dull sisters. I don't blame a man or a boy for his manners. I blame the women who have permitted him to grow up in them. The mother who has lifted coal and water while he sat and read; the sisters who have warmed his slippers, and mended his gloves without insisting upon a 'Thank you.' Perhaps the father who has n't whipped manners into him is a little to blame, but I always judge a boy's mother

by his manners. I am sorry for those — boys, ma'am."

Now, Our Tender is sorry for their mothers. What do you say about it, children?

YOU 'LL BE SORRY WHEN I 'M DEAD.

"You 'll be sorry when I 'm dead."

It was not a boy who said that, you may be sure; it was one of Our Tender's best beloved girls, as bright and as clever a lass of sixteen as ever made her father and mother proud of her; but she uttered the little speech carelessly in the Lawyer's hearing, and his sharp eyes were fastened on her at once with a look of disapproval.

"And you 'll be glad of it?" he demanded.

"Yes, I shall," replied the girl hastily. "I want her to be sorry. She 's planning something very unkind."

"You are glad, then, when persons are unhappy," the Lawyer said. "You enjoy seeing sickness and pain and discomfort, do you?"

"Why, no!"

"But you would be glad to know that your friend was going to be unhappy?" he persisted.

The girl was silent, but after a minute she went to the person to whom she had spoken, said, "Forgive me," and then came and sat down by the Lawyer's chair. In other parts of the room the talk went on gayly, and soon everybody had forgotten the little incident, and even the Lawyer himself was startled when she said, softly, "I did n't think, or I would n't have said it. Was ever anybody so silly before?"

"Lots of women," replied the Lawyer cheerfully. "I sometimes think, my dear young lady, that your amiable sex never enjoys itself better than when it reflects how very sorry persons who do not appreciate its virtues are going to be — some time. You do not reflect that all that grief and lamentation to come after you are dead will not be heard by your deaf ears. You seem to fancy that it will be followed by the beautiful reconciliation which you might bring about now if you chose. Your wish is not purely revengeful. You want your friend to suffer, that she may come around to your opinion, not that she may be punished for differing from you; but the result of your wish, if it could come to pass, would be to work the direst revenge that could be inflicted. You are young, my child; you do not know what it is to be sorry when somebody is dead; to feel that while you are in this world there can be no

change in your relation to him; that the petty wrangle over a trifle can never be brought to an end; to feel that the harshness caused by hastiness, and never meant to hurt, must come back to wound your own heart every day; that the bitter words written by your hand can never be revoked: you don't guess the pain of all this, but if you try to imagine it, you won't use your little phrase again."

"I was naughty," the girl said; and Our Tender, who had been listening all the time, loved her better than ever for her gentle humility, and the Lawyer looked at her as if he thought that there were worse girls in the world.

"I could tell you some queer things that women do in the hope of bringing about that *post-mortem* grief," he said, after awhile; "it comes in the way of my business to see a great many of their devices, and they would be funny if they were not so productive of sorrow. Some satisfy themselves with not leaving any money to persons who have expected it, but that is sheer spite, and not exactly the kind of feeling that you showed a little time ago. Others prepare elaborate letters, with little stings in every paragraph; some leave doleful messages, enough to turn your hair gray to hear, and some send for their friends when they feel their end approaching, and talk in

a heart-breaking way. Child, such persons seem more unnatural to me than the woman in the old heathen ballad who came back from the grave to wipe away her children's tears, for she came for the sake of kindness. It is a misfortune to cause grief; a sin to bring it about wilfully for pure sentimentality, as these women do. It may seem a little far-fetched to you, but I think it would be more Christian not to show when your feelings are hurt, so that nobody will have any cause for remorse when you are dead; but perhaps that 's a little too much to ask of human nature. It is well that our virtues should be lamented; not that others should sorrow for us as the victim of their faults. I remember one case," said the Lawyer, with a little smile, "in which a man brought a locked desk to me, and asked me to look through it. 'I have n't the courage,' he owned. 'My sister told me that it contained all my letters to her, and a few words which might let me know that she forgave me all my wrong-doing. Now that, as a certain writer says, means cream — of tartar, and oil — of vitriol. You go through the papers, preserve anything of consequence, burn the rest, and say nothing to me about them.' I obeyed orders, — and I burnt everything. The woman had endorsed all the letters with little notes that it would have broken a man's heart to read, if he had been anything

but a cold-blooded old lawyer like me, in which case he would have seen that they were written not when the letters were received, but all at once when the desk was arranged for the last time; and to leave such a bequest seemed about as wicked as to bequeath a box of poison in the guise of medicine."

"I wonder why she did it," said the girl.

"Why," said the Lawyer, "for just the same reason that you spoke so just now. She had read some novels with beautiful scenes of sorrow in them, and with the queer, half-way kind of imagination that some persons have, she determined to bring about something similar. She neither realized the misery that she would have caused, nor the true nature of her act in bringing it to pass. It was half-read novels that made the mischief."

"But you read novels yourself," said the girl.

"Yes, and I read Shakespeare, too," said the Lawyer, "but I don't shut my eyes when I do it. I don't go out and insult the poor after reading 'Coriolanus,' and I don't write miserable letters to wring persons' hearts, because some pretty heroine suffers agonies from an epistle of that kind. I find warnings in my plays and novels, not models. When I want these I read of real persons;" and here somebody came and carried

the pretty girl off to supper, and Our Tender said, "I 'm going to write out that talk for my girls."

"Well, it won't hurt them," said the Lawyer, "and perhaps about one in nineteen of them will believe one word of all I said to the child. She won't be sorry when I 'm dead, if I scold her like that at many more little parties."

A CAT CONCERT.

WA-AU-OO-AH-YAH!

That is a pretty sound to hear in the middle of the night, and it was not a red Indian who made it or a panther, either, but as sweet and innocent a white kitty as ever wore a blue ribbon, and said, "P-r-r-r" for cream, although she sat on the kitchen roof and uttered that cry as shamelessly as if it were not certain to disturb those who gave her the cream, or at least to give them bad dreams. But she did not care; there she sat, Kitty Clover, and opened her little mouth, and gave that shriek, and she was not alone, either. Prince Jones, the big black cat from the corner house, stood on a shingle very near her, his eyes

glittering through the dark, and Brownie Brown and Tortoise Loomis and Spotty Perkins occupied other shingles, and after Kitty Clover had shrieked two or three times, they all lifted their voices in a grand chorus of "WA-AU-OO-YAH-AH-YAH!" that seemed fit to start the bricks from the chimney tops. Nothing fell but silence, however; not even Our Tender, for she clung to the window-curtain and peeped out. Apparently this was a cat concert, and, being well acquainted with the performers, she thought that she had a right to play audience. After the last grand shriek, there was quiet for a minute, and then Spotty Perkins gave a delicate little cough, and said, "That high note really strained my throat. Has anybody a pellet of chlorate of potash?"

"Yes," said Brownie Brown; "I noticed a curious hoarseness on that upper C. It 's very unfortunate, dear."

"It 's all your method," Kitty Clover purred, gently. "Now, I never strain my throat."

Apparently Prince Jones had heard singers talk before, and knew how sensitive they are, for he eagerly asked, "Was n't that a window opening?" and then cried, "To shelter!" with so much energy that every cat scudded over the shingles and out of sight in a second. There had been no sound of a window, however, and Prince knew it,

and in a minute or two he was back on the roof and was singing: —

"Come he—ere
My de—ar!
Don't sta—ay,
I pra—ay!"

in a manner so irresistible that, defying all possible danger, the other cats were soon in their old places.

"It 's very sad," said Brownie Brown, as she came up last and skipped gracefully to her shingle, "we live in fear and danger by day and by night. Even when we try to improve ourselves by a little music, and to rise above low thoughts of mice and rats, we are persecuted. Men seem to think that we ought to live for them only."

"Yes," said Spotty Perkins, huskily "I caught two mice to-day, disgusting little things! I only did it out of kindness to my mistress, who had been setting traps and doing all kinds of things instead of chasing the mice to their holes, as an energetic cat would. And when I carried those mice to her, what do you think she did? 'Ah!' said she, 'now you 've a luncheon, Spotty.' And I expected a little fish for dinner at the least."

"It is always so," said Brownie Brown. "A lady sent and borrowed me the other day, telling my mistress that she had a houseful of mice, and

you ought to have heard her say, 'I 'll keep her hungry,' when she carried me away. And there were no mice in her house, either; only big rats in the walls, and they would not come out, and I could not get in, and the lady put great heavy covers on her milk-pans, and shut her fish and meat in a big, ugly box, and the only comfort I had was to sit near a medicine-chest and sniff some delicious valerian."

"They tried to make me eat a rat once," said Prince Jones, "but I went out and caught a sparrow; one of those chipping, chirping sparrows, that begin their noise at sunrise when all really nice persons want quiet, and I ate him; and they had to throw their rat away. I catch them, of course, but I draw the line there. I will not eat them."

"Nor I," said Tortoise Loomis. "But, dear friends, shall we not sing again? Won't you favor us, Miss Brownie Brown?"

"I have forgotten all my solos," said Miss Brown; "but if you would kindly growl an accompaniment, I might try 'Mice are Sweet.'"

"With pleasure," replied Tortoise Loomis; and he growled melodiously, while Brownie Brown sang: —

"Mice are sweet
And complete,
So are rats,
Unto cats.

"But we don't
And we won't,
Either eat
Though they 're sweet."

Brownie used all the trills and shakes imaginable, and the feeling with which she executed the first stanza seemed unsurpassable, until she sang the last with such force and determination, that all the other cats repeated it in grand chorus, coming in on the final "sweet" with a wonderful volume of tone.

"Something like," Prince Jones cried, as the last echo died away. "We 're in fine voice tonight. Miss Clover, would you give us 'Cream Delightful?'"

"Well, really," said Kitty, with her head on one side, and simpering as if she came from Cheshire, "I am somewhat exhausted with that last chorus. Perhaps if you would do your 'Bootjacks, we Defy You,' I might find strength to sing my poor little song after you."

Prince was nothing loth, and he advanced to the ridgepole, arched his back until he looked like a "V," drew out his legs until he seemed very tall, spit four times, made his tail look like a lamp-chimney brush, and began: —

"Bootjacks, we defy you!
Wherefore should we fly you?
Ye are only wood,
Ye are only wood.

"Soap-dishes we fear not;
Puppy-dogs appear not;
Far from us they fly,
Far from us they fly."

Prince descended to such wonderful depths and climbed to such heights of vocalization that no other cat dared to join in with him, but they all applauded when he finished, and cried for "Kitty Cl-o-o-ver."

Kitty began very gently in a meek little voice that seemed to come from the very tip of her tail, and sang: —

"Cream delightful,
Sweet, delicious!
Theft is rightful
And not vicious
When 't is cream that kittens steal."

These words were repeated in every possible way, the lines being changed about several times, and sung in several different styles, and the cats called it very fine, although Our Tender found it rather dull; but while they were all praising Kitty, Our Tender awoke and found herself in bed, with no cat in sight or hearing, and then she remembered what Prince Jones' mistress had said about Prince's naughty refusal to eat rats, and decided that her whole dream had come from that, and that she had not been at a cat concert at all. But they looked so funny, those cats, as they sat

there, and put on all the airs and graces of human creatures! And they sang so well! Was it not too bad that it was only a dream?

LITTLE NANNIE ETTICOAT.

Miss Mollie turned up her fastidious little nose last night when she found that she was to go to bed by candlelight.

"I like the country," she said; "I like the water and the trees and grass and flowers and birds, and perhaps the bugs, — a little, — but I do think that a candle is a nuisance."

Dear old Mrs. Dainty, who has the next room to Mollie's, turned her head to look at the child, holding her own pretty green coil of waxen taper so that its light fell on her gray hair and bright, glancing black eyes.

"And to think," she said with a little laugh, "to think how few years it is since any light but that of wax candles was considered inelegant, and great ladies sat in rooms which we, with our blaze of gaslight, should consider half dark. Undress without any light, if you don't like the candle, Mollie mine," she went on, "and come to my

room to-morrow and I 'll tell you something about candles, and show you some that you may like to see."

Mollie obeyed, willing to do almost anything for the sake of a story, and the next afternoon she tapped at Mrs. Dainty's door with her little mind made up for something pretty. She found it too, for her kind entertainer showed her a whole box of little wax candles, each with its painted decoration of flowers on a colored or gilded ground, and told her the story of the young girl who maintained herself and her little brother by painting them and doing similar work, and then talked to her a long time about candles.

"When I was young," said Mrs. Dainty, "there were no gas companies, and, although a few rich persons made gas for their own use, the ordinary light used by persons in moderate circumstances was either an oil lamp or a candle, and most rich persons used wax candles. They did not give so good a light as a lamp, but they were more costly and were considered more elegant."

"They don't smell quite so bad as kerosene," said Mollie; "but you don't truly like them, do you, Mrs. Dainty?"

"I 'm afraid I do," answered the old lady. "Nothing can be cleaner or neater than my little taper. See," and she lighted the little green

snake and set it on the table for Mollie to examine. "They used, when I was young," she said, with a little laugh, "to think that the light of a wax candle was more becoming than any other, possibly because it was dimmer, and the ladies who aimed at being fashionable used to say that a person of refinement would not burn tallow or spermaceti. This was silly, of course, like the English fancy, when gas was introduced, that persons of refinement would not use it, but would continue to employ candles and argand lamps. By and by, if the electric light should come into use, and should be very cheap, I dare say that some wiseacre will discover that gas was much more refined, and will insist that all fashionable persons must use it. Meanwhile, as I do not want much light from my little taper, it is better for me than kerosene; but it was not kerosene that we burned in lamps when I was young, but whale oil and lard oil, neither of which smelled very good or gave a very bright light. We used lamps with chimneys and shades like the kerosene parlor lamps that you see nowadays; but for our bedrooms we had tall lamps set in large round plates like old-fashioned candlesticks; but when we wished to be very nice the great candelabra and the mirror sconces were fitted with wax candles, and we sat in the dark and thought ourselves

lovely because we were invisible. Then came the days of burning fluids, explosive compounds that gave some light when they did not burst the lamps and burn the house down, and then came gas and kerosene; but I used my little tapers for bedroom lights through them all, and always shall use them. Did you ever see candles made, Mollie? No? Well, some day, perhaps, your mother will take you to a candle factory. They use several kinds of wax, you must know, but beeswax is the best, and only a little of the others is employed. They are made in a curious machine which winds the wax around and around the wick in overlapping layers, and then smooths it, and sends it out of a spout in an endless candle which is cut up into proper lengths. My little tapers are made by drawing the wick through melted wax, and then through a hole in an iron plate. As it comes through the hole, it is wound around a cylinder, and that gives it its serpentine shape. The large church candles are made of sheet wax, rolled between two plates, and are very dear."

"What are dipped candles?" asked Mollie. "I 've heard persons speak of them, but I don't know what they are."

"You would n't know them from mould candles," said Mrs. Dainty, smiling. "They are made by dipping the wicks into tallow again and

again, and 1,296 are made at once. It 's like the story of the seven wives with their seven sacks: —

'Each sack had seven cats,
Each cat had seven kits;
Kits, cats, sacks and wives,
How many going to St. Ives?'

"The candle-dipping machine is a post with twelve arms, and each arm has six rods, and each rod has eighteen wicks, and as the post is slowly turned around, each rod of wicks is successively dipped into the tallow, until the candles are heavy enough. Moulded candles are made by simply pouring the liquid tallow into a mould, through which the wick is stretched. Spermaceti candles are the best. They are made of sperm oil, which comes from the whale. The oil is strained, and the spermaceti is pressed in bags, powdered, pressed again, boiled with lye to clear it of any traces of oil, and moulded. Then the whole process is repeated, and the spermaceti is ready to be made into candles. It is very pretty and clear, and burns well, and there are colored spermaceti candles quite as nice to look at as wax. Did you ever see a rush light?"

"Never," said Mollie. "What is a rush?"

"It is a little weed that grows in the water, and which, when dipped in grease, will burn a great while," replied Mrs. Dainty. "It was formerly

much used in Ireland and in England, and as it only costs half a cent, and burns five hours, it is cheaper even than kerosene."

"Kerosene brings mosquitoes," said Mollie, ruefully, looking at a red spot on her arm.

"Any light does that," rejoined Mrs. Dainty; "but if you really don't like the mosquito, you must burn a little Persian powder in your room. Wind it in a bit of fine tissue paper, place it in a tin or earthen dish, and set it afire; or keep your burned matches, and when you go to bed cover them with the powder and light them one by one in your candle. Perhaps you would better let your mother do it. You don't want to set the house afire, and you might, you know, and not kill the mosquitoes either. If she manage the powder just right, every single mosquito that smells it will be suffocated, and it will not hurt you at all."

Mollie looked vengeance on the poor insects, but she thanked Mrs. Dainty for her talk about candles, and gratefully accepted a little green snake for herself, promising to take great care of it. "I shall," she said just now as she finished telling the story of her afternoon. "It's too pretty to burn. I shall put it away."

WANTED, — A DOG.

"I WISH," said the Poet, with much gravity and solemnity, "that I had a little dog."

Now pray, dear boys and girls, do not read as far as that and no further, and then run away to find a dog to send him; for he will not be pleased to have his house besieged by collies, and setters, and terriers, and hounds, and St. Bernards, and pugs, as if he had advertised "Dog Lost." The Poet was only indulging himself in a little wishing for fun; it is a way that he has.

"Do you want him to bay the moon?" asked Our Tender; "most verse-writers can do that for themselves, begging your pardon."

"No," said the Poet, nodding his head a little and setting his mouth, "but I want him to bite boys."

That was a pretty thing to say, boys, was n't it? A dog to bite boys!

"All boys," inquired Our Tender, "or some especially favored youths?"

"Boys that slander decent little dogs by calling themselves cynics, and their snarling, cynicism," said the Poet, nodding again. "They do not know enough, for the most part, to be aware that a cynic is a dog-like snarler, but they say 'I am

a cynic' with as much coolness and as little shame as one might say 'I am a blacksmith;' and whenever I meet one it would be agreeable to me, as soon as the sentence leaves his silly little mouth, to set a good, healthy, sensible dog on him, and see if he really were as disgusted with life as he pretended to be. Then some of the little simpletons call themselves pessimists, of all things! They think that they think that everything is as bad as it can be, and goes as wrong as wrong can be, and they express what they call their opinions at every opportunity, and with what a smirk! They are small, unhealthy youngsters generally. I never heard a rosy, happy, bright fellow ever say anything of the sort, but every few days some very thin, pale, pink-eyed youth, of eighteen or so, tells me that he is a pessimist, and that consequently he believes that nothing is going right. Why, it's blasphemous, when you come to think of it, it's blasphemous! And I want a dog."

Now Our Tender knew pretty well that none of her boys had ever troubled the Poet with dyspeptic lamentations, but still, as they may become foolish as they grow older, especially if they happen to associate with silly persons, she encouraged the Poet to go on by putting on what our friend the Philosopher calls a receptive face,

saying to herself, "I 'll tell the boys every word he says."

"I can excuse a man for being a cynic," said the Poet, "if he be poor, and absolutely friendless and without any kin, and — and blind and deaf and dumb, and — paralyzed, provided that all his misfortunes have come to him through no fault of his own. Under those conditions, a man may be pardoned for being unkind to every created thing that comes near him, and for cherishing some very hard thoughts, but I never saw a man quite so afflicted, and the invalids and deformed persons whom I do know are, as a class, the least inclined to be cynical, or to adopt the views of the pessimists. I don't object to truth-telling, mind. It does not trouble me to hear an elderly man, after having striven all his life to benefit his fellow-men, say that he has found a great many, or even the majority of them, ungrateful, and that he has not done nearly so much good as he hoped to do when he was young and sanguine. When my friend the Reformer says that to me, I know that he is quite aware that men are ungrateful only because they are ignorant, and that there is a higher reward for doing right than is to be found even in human gratitude, sweet as that is to any one who loves his fellow-men. I don't mind even when a sharp-

tongued person shows me the faults of my acquaintances, for after all it only comes to a statement that we are not quite perfect, and I know that myself, and have faith to believe that there is mercy for all of us. I don't object to ill-temper; when it 's my own, I try to escape from it, and when it 's another's, I know that he 'll recover and be sorry for it, and in either case it 's only an infirmity, of which we may be ashamed, but to which we are subject; but to hear these infants who ought to be whipped and sent to bed, talking of the hollowness of the world, and the uselessness of honesty, and the scarcity of honor! I was visiting the Lawyer the other day, and found in his youngest clerk a boy who ought to be in school — one of the fellows for whom I want the dog. He was giving the office-boy some instructions about an errand, and the little fellow looked up at him with a pair of the most honest black eyes that you ever saw, and said he, 'But that is n't true; I can't say that.' You should have seen Mr. Cynic! He bowed his head in an Olympian way, and looked at the boy with pitying smile, and, said he, 'My young friend, if you want to succeed in this business you 'll have to learn to lie. Or if you want to succeed in any other business. Is n't that so, Mr. Poet?' Now I did not know the boy, but I should have spoken to him

even if he had not addressed me, and tried to take a little of the poison out of the young mind that he was doing his best to corrupt, but his employer was too quick for me. 'You 've learned too much,' said he, laying down his pen and looking at the young man. 'You 've learned altogether too much for this office, young man. There is no respectable profession in which you may not be honest, nay, in which you must not be honest in order to win permanent success. There are very few professions, trades, or branches of business in which you can be a blatant idiot, telling what you think that you know in the public street, and possibly you think that it is dishonest and untruthful not to proclaim your employer's business, but it is n't ; and if you have n't brains enough to make the distinction for yourself, you 'll never make a lawyer. I think that I shall want your desk about next Monday.'

"'My father ——' the boy began —

"'I don't care anything about your father,' said the Lawyer, 'nor your grandfather, although, as he was an upright judge, I am sorry that he ever had such a grandson as you. I know that it will cost me something to send you away, but I don't care. A person who is somewhat of a pessimist, as I heard you call yourself the other day, poisons the moral atmosphere. We should n't have a

decent clerk nor a decent office-boy in five years, if you had mental force enough to impose your ideas upon the office. I wish you a good morning, Mr. Pessimist, and more faith in your race.'

"'I would n't have been quite so severe with most clerks,' said the Lawyer to me afterwards, 'but that boy's father has money enough to spoil him, unless he receives a few sharp lessons while he is young. He knows now that there is at least one professional man in this town whom money cannot buy, and who will not endure a clerk who is "somewhat of a pessimist."'

"When I asked the Lawyer if he were very often troubled by young men of that sort he said no; that those who knew enough to come to study with him knew enough to feel sure that the world could not go on if it were not going exactly right; and that if it were possible for a pin to stray out of the place in which the everlasting forces put it, the whole universe would go wrong. 'It is the silly persons who doubt,' he said. 'They call themselves thoughtful, but they are really either bilious or bloodless.'

"Now that," said the Poet, "was consoling to me, but that was only one young pessimist, and there are others in the world, and whene'er I take my walks abroad so many poor I see of their kind that I want a dog."

ALL IN THE FAMILY.

"It 's all in the family."

That is what Our Tender heard a boy say yesterday, as he coolly ran off with a sled, and left his little brother to cry for it, which he did with much energy and volubility. The speech set her thinking, not that she had not heard it before, or that she approved of the signification which Master Selfishness gave it, but because there are so many things which ought to be all in the family and are not.

Quarrels, of course, ought not to be in the family, but, when you do have them there, when you, Mistress Mary, are quite contrary, and you, Master Jacky Horner, do not find the plum in your Christmas pie, and you, Master Tommy Linn, are whipped by your big brother for putting the cat in the well, let that be the end of it. Sulk your sulkiness away somewhere, reconcile yourself to doing without the plum, console yourself for your well-earned flogging, but do not, the next time that Mrs. Hubbard calls to tell your mother about some of the tricks of that wonderful dog of hers, do not relate the story, your contrariness, or your lack of plums, or your adventure with the cat and its consequences. Keep it all in the

family. Mrs. Hubbard does not care anything about it, and you will only make her uncomfortable by acting as if you expected her sympathy with your petty squabbles. If your big brother, Master Tommy, should be mean enough to say that he whipped you, do not fight the battle over again. Be silent until you can bring the talk back to Mrs. Hubbard's dog.

Then again, if you, one of the children who ran away when all those who were sliding on the ice fell in, should try to tell the story to Mrs. Hubbard, and your sister, who was not near the ice, should interrupt you to add some particulars that you know are incorrect, be quiet and let the story go as she pleases, only taking the occurrence as a warning never to do such a thing yourself. If there be anything of which no outsider ought to catch a glimpse, it is the petty bickering that goes on in some families. It is a shame that it should go on at all, but if you be not strong enough nor good enough to keep from it, do not vex outsiders by the sight of it. They will not like you any the better for it, and you will accomplish no good by exhibiting yourself as a disputant about trifles.

Again, it may be you have a very decided opinion about the conduct of your sister or your brother in regard to some particular matter. You may think, Miss Etticoat, that it was very extrava-

gant of Nannie to buy that pretty white satin short skirt to wear to the party, but when little Mary Ester comes in to talk it all over the next day, do not frighten her away by asking her what she thinks about the skirt, and trying to make her take sides with you against Nannie; she will not do it if she be wise, but she will make up her mind that you and Nannie are two quarrelsome girls, and she will think so as long as she lives. Then again if you, Miss Tucker, consider that your brother Tommy was very undignified in singing for his supper, and feel sure that you would have gone without white bread and butter for some time before you would have won them by any such performance, do not ask Little Boy Blue about it when he comes in to see you and to talk about the hard times that he has to keep the sheep from the meadow and the cows from the corn.

Then again if you have a dispute on your way to see Mr. Peter, at whose house you always find those nice pumpkin pies, do not show by your step and movement, as you go along the road, that you are quarrelling. Keep your trouble to yourselves. Deceitful? Not a bit. It is only decent. Do not quarrel at all, if you can help it, but if you must, keep it in the family, provided it begins there.

There is another thing that you might do well to keep in your own families, although you will not believe it, and that is your unreasoning love. That does not mean the kind of affection that has some foundation, but that kind of fondness which binds two girls or two boys together for a few days, and then disappears leaving only the ugly scar of a quarrel behind it. Our Tender does not want to discourage you from admiring and emulating everything that is noble and lovely in the character of your playmates, nor from trying to make yourselves dear to those who attract you, but she would like to make you a little cautious about giving all your confidence and esteem to persons at first sight. You have all done it, girls. There is n't one of you who could not tell of the time when you went into a new school, and attached yourself to a girl, told her every one of your childish secrets, and in two days wished that you had not, and in three days would not speak to her, and the boys all know similar stories of which they are the heroes. Now the only persons whom it is safe to take on trust in that way are those of your own family. A thousand ties will keep them true to you, and in spite of your little quarrels they will stand by you through real trouble and trial, but think before you select friends outside the hallowed

home circle. Do not be clannish nor selfish, but be reasonable; and when you have a friend, do not insist that he shall adopt your family, or that your family shall adopt him. That he likes you is no reason why he should be compelled to like your brother or your sister. Learn to keep him out of the way of those with whom he does not accord, and if you do not like your brother's friends, avoid them. Do not talk against them to him, however, but leave that to your father and mother. If you, gentle Kate, happen to know that Will's friend John is not the boy that he should be, tell your mother, but keep silence about it to him. The character of friends is not a topic upon which brothers and sisters ever did or ever will agree, and it should be kept out of the family.

OF "SCAT-CATS."

"WHAT a scat-cat!" cried Jimmy Brown, the other day, as he sprang upon the crosswalk, darted in and out, between heavy express wagons, and under horses' noses, until he reached the opposite side of the street, and turned back to see his big brother quietly waiting until the way was clear for

him to walk across. "Say," the youngster continued as the two walked on, "I thought that you learned to leap, and run, and do all kinds of wonderful things at your college! I expected to see you get across in half the time that I could, instead of crawling along like a street car-horse. If I knew how, I 'd take all kinds of flying leaps and things. Were you scat?"

"I was neither scat nor scared," replied the student, giving a good-natured nip at his brother's hand to enforce the correction. "I was simply careful, and so is everybody who knows what he is about. I could have crossed more easily than you did, but suppose that there had been another silly little boy behind me, and that he, trying to follow my example, had been run over. Some day, when you have nothing else to do, take the newspapers, and count the deaths caused by pure carelessness. You won't need any lecture from me on the subject after that."

"I never knew a boy to be run over," said Jimmy, with the air of one whose personal experience ought to be considered as a final argument.

"I saw one escape it by a hair's breadth a few minutes ago," answered his brother. "If one of those teamsters had not had strong arms as well as a kind heart, you would have been under his

horses' feet, and I never should have blamed him. If you read the newspapers, you will find that a great many boys are run over, and by their own fault, too. They do not take the trouble to count their chances for safety, but rush across the street in a happy-go-lucky way, and then the policeman picks them up and sends them off to the hospital."

"Skipping over crossings is n't so careless as playing with matches," remarked Jimmy, condescending to take the defensive.

"You should distinguish between cause and effect," replied the student brother, producing a greater impression than he imagined, for, not knowing exactly what he did mean, Jimmy suspected him of saying something very profound. "Your carelessness in putting yourself in front of a trotting horse is as great as your carelessness in playing with fire, but the consequences of the former act will be confined almost entirely to your own personal injuries, while those of the latter might involve your whole family or even a whole city. It was only a cow kicking over a lantern that was needed to burn Chicago, you know, and a card of matches and a naughty boy may do as much mischief any day. Kerosene seems to have been invented to widen careless persons' field of uselessness, and as you look over your papers

you will probably find that each of them contains at least one story of death caused by pouring kerosene upon a fire to make it burn, or by trying to fill a burning kerosene lamp."

"Kerosene will make a fire burn," responded Jimmy, "but father won't let me use anything but paper and shavings to kindle the wood. I only want to pour a little on the wood before I light the fire, but he says 'No.'"

"There's no danger in that, provided that your stove is not shut up closely, and that the oil is good, but nobody ever stops short at that. Some day the 'little' kerosene does n't seem to do any good, and the paper smoulders and the wood smokes, and somebody, as it might be you, Jimmy, takes off a cover to pour in the kerosene, and the blaze flares up, and lights the gas in the top of the can, and there is an explosion, and — well, perhaps you live to be sorry, and perhaps you don't. You cannot be too careful when dealing with things that are dangerous. Kerosene is no safer now because you are well acquainted with it, than it was when you were a little fellow, and, having burnt your fingers on the lamp, used to cry at the smell of it. I saw a story the other day about a boy, who, having caused a great fire, said 'Please, sir, I did n't mean to do it.' 'Ah, but you must mean not to do it,' answered his em-

ployer, and that is what you must do all the time when you are among dangerous things."

"It's very hard," said Jimmy, walking over a crosswalk in a gingerly fashion, although the only wagon in sight was drawn by a meditative-looking horse, who did not seem capable of running down a snail.

"Oh, it's easy enough for us," replied his brother. "Think of the men who work in powder mills, and cannot wear iron-nailed shoes, lest they should strike a spark against the floor. Think of the men who make fulminate of silver, that fearful stuff that is exploded by a jar; or nitroglycerine, which will blow a man to pieces if he should step heavily on a few drops of it! But they all grow careless in the presence of danger, just as you would with your kerosene can. It was only this morning that I read of a man who put some dynamite cartridges on a steam pipe to dry. In due time they did dry, and the doors and windows in fifty-five houses flew in pieces at the same time, and everybody who was not too much injured by flying glass and splinters to form an opinion, thought there was an earthquake. The men ought to have 'meant not to do it,' you see. To avoid accidents you must be full of care all the time, Jimmy, boy."

"Oh, yah!" said Jimmy, disappearing down a

side street, as small boys will disappear when one tries to lecture them, instead of saying "I will try to improve," as they do in the books, but, upon the whole, don't you think that the student was right, children, and that carefulness is a virtue which you should all cultivate? Our Tender does not wish you to be cowards, but she does not want any of her boys and girls burned alive by kerosene, run over by heavy carts, nor otherwise made to suffer in consequence of carelessness.

NOT MUCH OF A FRIEND.

"I DON'T think you 're much of a friend!" Kitty cried, as she ran into the house, and closed the door after her so quickly that she had to open it again to extricate a fold of her dress, thus quite spoiling the dignity of her departure for Ellen, who stood at the foot of the steps, looking after her with a rather demure expression, and not appearing quite crushed by Kitty's action.

"She 's the meanest girl!" cried Kit, as she came into the sitting-room, and watched Ellen walk across the park, with brisk little steps in which there did not seem to be any doubt as to

whether she who made them had done unwisely; "she's the very meanest girl! Why don't you say anything?" she asked, looking up at Our Tender. "She is just what I called her!"

"But the other day, you said that she was your dearest friend, and I am afraid you might resent it if I said anything unkind."

"The other day! Well, she was good to me then. She gave me my second doll, you know, and I have good times when I go over to play with her, but just think! Lucy Smith and I have had a quarrel and don't speak, and that Ellen! that Ellen keeps on speaking to Lucy, and now she has told me that I am wrong, and that I ought to speak first. Lots of the other girls are on my side, but I don't care about them; Ellen was my friend, and she ought to stand by me."

"Do the other girls know how she feels?"

"Well, they see that she speaks to Lucy of course, but she didn't tell anybody but me that she thought I was wrong. She has been talking to me all the way home, just as cross! and mean!"

"'Mean' isn't quite the right word to use, Kitty, but we'll let that pass for the present. You think that Ellen is a bad friend, because she doesn't agree with you, eh? Why don't you make

up your mind that henceforth you will constantly gaze at your own image in a mirror, talk to it, make pretty faces at it, show it your dolls, tell it your secrets? It will never contradict you, will be pleasant when you are pleased, cross when you are ill-tempered, in fact everything that you think a friend ought to be."

"But I want a friend to talk to me," Kitty cried.

"Buy a phonograph then, and talk your own sentiments into it, and when you turn the crank, it will talk them all over, and if you have said that Lucy Smith was hateful, or that Ellen was mean, it will repeat it with perfect accuracy. You don't look as if you would like that, either. Pray, for what did you like Ellen at first?"

"Oh, because she was so kind, and then she is so honest! She never says one thing to you and another about you! But friends ought to stick together."

"And is n't it sticking together when one shows the other a fault? My Kitty, if Ellen brushed a caterpillar off your gown, would you quarrel with her for saying it was there? She is doubly your friend when she tries to make you a better girl. She has 'stood by you,' I think. She came home with you to-day, instead of joining Lucy and her little flock. I know, for I saw them go by a few

minutes before you came along and guessed by their manner, as they looked up at me, that there was a small battle going on in your class, for you little folks are almost transparent, sometimes, Kit. She 'stuck' to you but she tried to make you do right. Kitty, my dear, you don't know what a friend is, if you don't go and thank her this very afternoon. I don't know and don't care which party is right in the Kitty-Lucy quarrel; that 's for you to settle between yourselves; but Ellen is a real friend."

Kitty does not accept new ideas very readily, and she now remarked, "I shan't try to have any more friends — ever. I shall just go right on alone. There was Dolly McLean; she seemed the nicest girl that ever was, but she would n't come to play with me afternoons, just because her sister wanted her to play with her; and Mary Glines talked about her lessons for an excuse whenever I asked her to go to walk; and Lucy Smith would never play my games at recess; and now Ellen is preaching to me."

"You 'ld better buy a tame kitten," said the Poet, laughing as he looked at her face, "a gray kitten with white paws, or perhaps a stuffed kitten on a penwiper would suit you. You don't know the meaning of the word 'friend' yet, my dear. With you a friend is a creature who must give up

her home duties for you; must forget her school work, must have no will of her own, and lastly no ideas of right and wrong, but yours. You want to pull your friends down to your own level in everything. My dear, the person who does that, only makes weights to drag himself deeper in wrong-doing and selfishness. Live your life, and let your friends live theirs; when you see anything fine in their characters, imitate it, and give up nothing that you think is right because they say it is wrong."

"Yes, there it is again," said Kitty; "Jane Green says that she will never speak to me again, because I did n't prompt her in her geography lesson, and I promised you never to prompt a girl, because it was deceitful, oh-h-h — " and poor Kitty cried outright.

Well, we consoled the little maid, and she and Ellen were reconciled; and although the Kitty-Lucy war still rages with a fury which requires the publication of daily bulletins, Kitty no longer feels hurt because Ellen stands neutral, and she seems anxious to understand what a friend really is.

Are you any better informed than she was a little while ago, boys and girls, even those of you who are older than our cross little Kitty? Do you realize what a treasure a real friend is; what

a blight a false friend may be; what lifelong trouble may come to you from selecting the wrong person for a friend? Our Tender has thought much about it lately on your behalf, principally on account of a volume of sermons * to boys, that fell into her hands and brought up before her many of the old school troubles which were so very bitter while they lasted, and seemed so bitter even now, when she knows that they were really but trifles, and sees that they were lessons meant for her good. In this book she finds a passage or two which she is going to transcribe for you and she wants you to remember them.

"In the first place, no one friend or no ten friends are everything. Every one of us is pulled by other claims of those who employ us, trust us, cling to us, — no one, perhaps, so fascinating as these our few chosen comrades, but every one righteous, and twisted all together like a chain cable for strength. To satisfy all of these — to be sure that family and country, and teachers and business companions all get their rights, only the strict rule of duty, only obedience to God, only unbroken truth and courage and purity, can settle the conflicting claims. If for friendship we break the cord to-day, we cannot fasten it again to-morrow with due success; another and another blow

* "School Sermons;" by William Everett.

will weaken it until we are devoid of principle forever."

And again, — "Every year, I might say every month, the story comes to me of one of these young people who are good, but easily led. I should be ashamed of sneaking behind such a shield. Is any American boy willing to plead that, or let his parents plead it for him? Have we no more manhood, no more reliance on ourselves, than to be held out, year after year, as needing a keen eye upon us, because we are easily led? The victim of bad friends! And who made them your friends? It takes two to make a friendship. There is no victim bound to the altar that might not, if he would, have broken his chains; the sacrificer knows perfectly well who is a ready offering at the shrine of vice before he ties the cord of friendship around his neck." "Friendship like business, or amusement, or ambition, or any other alliance, is under the laws of sense and right, and while there is no greater blessing than a true friend, if all our intercourse with him be confirmed to these standards, a league which is formed in spite of them is nothing but a curse to both parties, and a disgrace to them in the eyes of others."

"Stand by each other, boys, outside as you have here; be strong together there as you have

been here; and whether for play or for study 'help everyone his neighbor, and let each say to his brother, Be of good courage.' But remember that friendship is not everthing; that it has its weak side. It is sad, it is miserable when boys and men are constantly acquiescing in the wrong, letting things go by, slackening in duty themselves, letting others slacken, simply from that weak good-nature which they confound with strong friendship; not daring to rebuke the crowd, not daring to set the high standard, not daring to act out their own nobility, to strike their own strong blows, because it will seem rough to some friend, who perhaps is longing to have them pull him up."

You won't forget this, boys and girls, who in school or in the early days of earning your own living, are choosing your friends. Live up to the best you know; climb to your friends' level if it be higher than yours; draw them up to your ground, if it be more elevated than theirs. Stand shoulder to shoulder in the battle of life, but if you see your friend throwing away his strength, tell him so as quickly as you would warn him of the stealthy approach of a foe, and guard him against his weaker self as you would guard him against any other enemy.

JUDGING IN HASTE.

"I SHOULD think that she would be ashamed to do so." "If I were in her place, I never should think of behaving in that way." "How much better it would be if she would only try another plan!" "I never should have allowed myself to get into such trouble." "There were so many better ways than the one that she used."

How often we hear speeches like these, boys and girls, and how often we make them unless we are very careful with our tongues, and how unreasonable and how wrong they are! It is natural, it is true, when one sees how a fellow-creature deals with his sorrow or joy, his poverty or his riches, to judge what he does and to think what our own conduct would be under the same circumstances, but that it is wrong to do so we know from the very highest authority of all, and that it is almost invariably unjust, we must acknowledge, if we stop a moment to reflect. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," but it does not know that of any other heart, and no human creature, no matter how faithfully he may strive, can truly set his troubles and his motives before another human creature. We must, therefore, make mistakes whenever we undertake to say what another

person should or should not do, and we ought to refrain from speeches of this kind. For instance, the other day Our Tender happened to visit a certain charitable institution, and she sat on one side of a screen, while on the other a girl was telling a long, long story of poverty and sickness to the good physician who sat there to give free advice to all who came. Her mother was sick, and had been sick for months, although she could manage to do some of the family work; her sister, a hopeless invalid, had arrived at that stage of her disease in which pain was constant, and in which the only thing to be done for her was to give her opiates, while her moans made everybody within hearing sick at heart. A little brother showed the early symptoms of the same disorder, and the speaker herself seemed convinced that she could look forward to but a few years of life. The father was dead, the family income was so small as to be hardly worth mentioning, and the speaker and her sick mother had to work very hard, whenever they were well enough to work at all, in order to provide themselves and the children with the poorest fare. The good doctor gave the speaker an order for medicine and for some nourishing food for the invalid, and a little money besides, probably, for these doctors are always doing such things in a quiet way, and then

the girl came out. Now, Our Tender felt very sympathetic until that moment, but at the sight of that girl her heart grew as hard as flint, and she said to herself, "How the poor doctor is cheated!" and she said so to him as soon as the girl was gone.

"Cheated! I guess not," he said, with a funny look. "I know all my patients, ma'am. They don't get ahead of me, not a bit; and that is a terrible case!"

"I should think it was," said Our Tender. "It looks like a very bad case, indeed. It 's easy to impose on a man, sir. Doctor, tell me, did n't you see what she wore?"

"Clothes, ma'am," he answered. "Good, warm clothes, too, I 'm happy to say. Death to her not to be warm, ma'am."

"Well," said Our Tender, "she might buy her own medicine if she can buy a $200 sealskin sacque! Poor, indeed! Oh, doctor—— Why are you laughing?"

"How can I help it?" he said. "For two winters that sealskin sacque of poor Mary's has been thrown at me, and I have had to tell its history to everybody whom I ask to give her anything, or to whom I send her for work, and it is too bad to have to tell it again. But since you feel so about the imposition on me, let me tell you that a rich

cousin of Mary's is in the habit of giving her presents of clothing, and, not having much judgment, often gives her things quite unfit for her to wear. The sealskin is one of these gifts. It saves the cost of a shawl, and so Mary is grateful for it, although it is an unhealthy garment except in very cold weather. I wish that she had never had it, and every woman that sees it says something harsh about it, and as for me, I think of buying the girl a shawl to save my lungs the wear and tear of talking about that sacque."

"The girl's cousin seems to be rather silly," said Our Tender, feeling rather ashamed, but still not taking to heart the lesson to avoid rash judgments.

"It seems so," said the doctor, slowly, "but I don't quite know;" and then the talk passed to other matters, and Our Tender almost forgot the girl, until only last week she was talking with a lady who said, "I am very careful about the things that I give to poor persons now, but I used to be so very thoughtless! Do you know, I once gave a sealskin sacque to a girl who really had n't anything fit to wear with it! No wonder you laugh, but I cried afterwards, and my father scolded me at intervals all winter. She is a distant cousin of mine, and I do all that I can for her, but it is n't much, for you know I have no

money of my own, and one day she came in looking so poor and pinched and cold that I put the sacque on her, and gave her a hot luncheon and sent her off with a rosy face, and sat down myself to feel the glow of a happy conscience which the books tell about. But somehow I didn't feel it, for I could not help remembering how absurd that sacque had looked with the plain little cashmere skirt under it, and the shabby old hat above it, and then I suddenly remembered that I really had not another warm winter garment to wear, and that I must buy one immediately, and that, worst of all, I must ask my father for the money! Well, we had a pleasant talk about it, I assure you. He told me that I was silly, and he said that it was not the first time that I had been, and that I often gave poor Mary things that did her more harm than good, simply because I would not think before I acted; and when he gave me the money he told me that he should consider that he gave it for charity, and that I should not have another cent to give away for a year. And he kept his word, too. He gave me the loveliest clothes, but I had to say 'No' to every application in behalf of the poor and sick and needy for twelve whole months, and I didn't enjoy the pretty things much, you may guess. And then every cold day when Mary came in she would say, 'So nice and warm, dear,

thanks to you,' and would look so absurd all the while that I felt as if I had purposely done something to make her ridiculous, and was ready to beg her pardon for it. My father says that it did me good, and I hope it did. It made me suffer enough to do me good."

Our Tender did not say much, but she went home with the little story of which chance had given her all the threads, and she felt as if she had been very naughty. Have any of her big girls or boys ever acted in the same way that she did? If so, they may take her little lesson to heart, and if they have not, they can take warning by it never to judge. Even when a person's conduct seems mean, low, and treacherous, be cautious about saying "I would not do so." You cannot tell what you might do or what it might seem right for you to do; and, upon the whole, living your own life rightly will try you severely enough, without your trying to live those of other persons.

QUOTING.

Slang is bad, but there is something almost as unpleasant, and that is the vice of quotation, which Our Tender regrets to see spreading so

fast among the young folks that some of them will talk half a day without saying an original word for themselves. Are any of you opening your eyes, and saying that you thought that the habit of quotation indicated wide reading and a well cultivated mind, and are you preparing to refer to the many great men who have been addicted to the practice, and to show Our Tender that what she calls a vice is really a virtue? Please understand that she makes a distinction between judicious and ill-placed quotation. All persons of taste enjoy the former as much as they are disgusted by the latter. Next to the intellectual pleasure which one derives from an original felicitous phrase is that which one feels when one hears an apt quotation introduced to illustrate a statement or point an argument. The speaker appears for a moment to have called to his side the spirit of some greater man, and to have double power, for, as one hears the familiar words, memories of others from the same mouth flash across the mind, and one seems to hear two voices, of which the strongest is not that which falls upon the physical ear, but that which re-echoes in the imagination. One of the cleverest pieces of writing which ever appeared in an American newspaper was a New York "Tribune" humorous editorial paragraph; it occupied about

a quarter of one of the "Tribune's" wide columns, and was a mosaic of quotations cemented together with so very little original matter, that the words which were the writer's own would not have filled five lines, but nevertheless it was a beautiful piece of work. Had this paragraph been shown to one of those clever Hindoos who explain the fact that they speak English better than we do by saying that they learn from the "Spectator," while we learn from our servants when we are children, he would have been struck by the perfection of its language, but he would not have dreamed that it was not original with the writer, as no phrase was in the least strained or distorted, or otherwise than it should have been. When you can quote easily and well, quote by all means; but if you cannot, do not quote at all.

Did you ever hear of the English barrister, who, in whatever court he might be, whatever might be the slightness or the gravity of his cause, never failed, before he closed his argument, to repeat: —

> "The rule of the road is as plain as your hand;
> In driving your carriage along
> If you go to the left you are sure to be right,
> If you go to the right you are wrong."

If any of her boys should ever come to be lawyers, they cannot use that quotation, which would be absolutely incorrect in this country, and so

Our Tender has no scruples about giving it to them, but think, if you please, how much power that man lost by his foolish habit! Juries listened to his arguments, not to weigh them, nor to judge the evidence by them, but to see whether or not he was leading up to his favorite quotation, and how he would use it. Judges yawned as he plodded through his pleas, and only woke up to laugh when the well-known jingle came to their ears, and even the parties opposed to him in a suit smiled indifferently while he made his way through the mazes of his speech, until he arrived at the inevitable —

"The rule of the road is as plain as your hand."

Just think of it! And when you have done, pray think about yourselves!

Honestly now, boys and girls, and especially girls, for, after boys have done with a quotation, girls generally take it up and wear its threadbareness into actual rags and tatters, — don't you say, "Hardly ever," or "Very pretty, very pretty," or "Not a happy one;" or don't you use any of the other well-worn "Pinafore" and "Pirates of Penzance" phrases? Do you never quote "Punch, brothers, punch with care?" Never use the wearisome "Not this evening — some other evening?" Don't you ever speak of the "cultivated

court of the Empress Josephine?" Don't you ever say "Good-morrow, good mother"? Have you not some antique piece of newspaper verse, some sentimental ballad refrain, some Gilbert and Sullivan tag which you use twenty times a day, not only spoiling the quality of your own conversation, but compelling everybody who hears you, will-he, nill-he, mentally to rehearse the whole piece of triteness, to the loss of his time, the detriment of his temper, and the utter destruction of his train of thought? You don't? and you haven't? Then shut yourselves up somewhere before you catch the infection, and acquire some pet quotations from the other young folks who quote from sunrise to sunset.

And you who have pet phrases, do you wish to know how to escape from their bondage? The way out is very easy. Learn some more. Commit a scrap of verse or prose to memory each morning; keep it in your mind all day if need be, and when the morrow comes, learn another. You will soon find yourselves equipped for all emergencies, and will wonder at your former dulness. Better still, think for yourselves, try and have some ideas of your own, so as to have something original to say when any one speaks to you, and if you cannot learn and cannot think, why you can at least keep silence.

Ask your fathers and mothers what they think about this matter, girls and boys, and see if they be not as tired of some of your quotations as Our Tender is, however patient may have been their endurance of them.

TOO BRIGHT AND GOOD.

PETERKIN came in to see Our Tender the day after Christmas; but when he had greeted the children and seen their presents and received their thanks for those which he had showered upon them, he did not seem to have much to say, and so she asked him what was the matter.

"Oh, I had a miserable Christmas," he answered, with a sigh; "and I 'm miserable now. I 'm going to make a good resolution at New Year's, madam. You 'll be glad, won't you?"

"Perhaps," she replied, rather doubtfully, for the expression of his face was peculiar. "It depends on what your good resolution is."

"I 'm going to resolve not to do another thing for anybody until all my own work is done," said the young man; "and I 'm going to keep my resolution, if you all hate and despise me. Think I am a pretty bad boy, don't you?"

"You would better tell me all about it," she answered, "and sit in the big chair while you tell, for you look tired to death."

"Very likely. It was three o'clock when I went to bed this morning, and I have n't had a moment's sleep before midnight for a fortnight, and nothing is done, either. I 've seen it coming for a year; but within the last month everything has seemed to fall on me at once. In the first place there were the readings and the private theatricals. You know I can read pretty well, and it is easy for me to learn a part, and so since last Christmas there has hardly been a week in which somebody or some society has not asked me to 'kindly do them the favor,' and rather than seem churlish I 've done it. Now, if 'doing them the favor' only meant giving them one evening, it would be bad enough, but it means going to rehearsals, and studying new parts, and spending money for costumes, and hurrying away from my work early one day, and going to it with a weary mind and wearier body the next. I won't read or play for the best possible object next year, and the poor and the hungry and the Ojibway Indians and the Hottentots and the Patagonians may all suffer together for me. Then there was the writing. There are five ladies who expect me to make out bills-of-fare for them, and three who like

to have me write invitations for them, and just when I am busiest they send in to know 'if dear Peterkin can do this immediately,' and dear Peterkin does it, and sits up all night in consequence, to finish the work by which he earns his bread and butter. Then there are the children. I love them dearly, but there are about ten whose mothers think that I can take them off on pleasure trips, or look after them at picnics, because I always have done it. I enjoy it, I don't deny it. I bring it upon myself sometimes by offering to do it, but it takes up time, and what am I good for after being nursery-maid and governess, and father, mother, aunts, and uncles to two or three children all day? Then there are the societies; I belong to six, and they all want me to be an officer, and that means more writing, and more nights of sitting up to do it, to say nothing of annual assessments and entertainments in which dear Peterkin must take a part."

"You seem to be a 'popular' young man," Our Tender said, for lack of any wiser remark.

"Oh, yes, that 's what I am. But I am going to be the worst disliked youth in the town. You wait until you hear them all growling about how disobliging I am; until you see them all pitying me for a person who has no ideas outside of his business; who does not care whether or not

household art is advanced, and does not seem conscious of the awful suffering of the Wankey-fungoes. You wait!"

"I will," Our Tender replied.

"And you wait until all the babies begin to cry that Peterkin is a cross old thing, and does n't play with them any more, and in fact never goes where they are if he can help it."

"I will," she said again.

"Oh, you don't believe it," he rejoined. "You think that you 've heard me talk before, and that I am only cross from the effects of my Christmas dinner. That is a mistake. I am as much in earnest as I ever was in my life, and I 'm not going to make many calls either, ma'am. I 'm going to be an unsocial, misanthropic bear; you wait."

"I will," said she, for the third time. "I have been waiting and hoping for it for years, but what has made you decide to take this course?"

"Did n't I tell you? My Christmas, and in fact my whole December. Of course my work has been very heavy, and everybody outside has had two or three little jobs which nobody but I could do, and I 've done them; oh! yes, I 've done them, and so I have n't had more than four hours' sleep at a time for thirty days; and although my work has been performed faithfully, it has been very

hard to do it, and all my own little plans for the holidays were left unfulfilled. I had meant to give some cards to one of the orphan asylums; they are in my desk now, because I could not get time to make them into a package for the expressman; I was going to carve a bracket for my sister; it lies on my work-bench half done. I was going to buy a choice book for my father. I had to give him one that was perfectly commonplace, because every copy of the one which I had selected was sold when I found time to try to buy it. I did not find the time until Christmas Eve, either. I had to pay twice as much for my mother's present as I need have done, if some rehearsals had not prevented me from buying it of some wholesale dealers whom I knew, and compelled me to go to strange retailers. I had to take what Christmas cards I could find Christmas Eve, and a pretty dingy looking lot they were; and I had to sit up until I don't know what o'clock to direct them, and post them Christmas morning, in the hope that my friends would blame the post-office, and not me. I slept too late to take my sisters to church, and they had to go without me; but really I could n't help it. I did manage to go to church in the afternoon, and then I had to eat the smallest fragment of a dinner, and drive Aunt Jenny ten miles to spend the evening with her

dearest friend. There was nobody else to do it, and 'Peterkin would kindly oblige her.' Peterkin obliged her, and after he came home at midnight he worked until three o'clock on things that should have been done last week, and here he is. Nobody had a much better Christmas on his account, and he 's a good-for-nothing."

"Well, you can't say that," Our Tender replied. "Aunt Jenny certainly had a happy evening, thanks to you, and you made a great many pretty gifts."

"That 's true, perhaps," the young fellow cried, eagerly, "but don't you see that nothing was so good as it might have been had I been content to do my own work? My gifts and cards might have been more wisely selected and sent in better time, and my sisters might have had my escort in the morning; I might have had plenty of time for dinner had I not been too tired to walk home quickly, and Aunt Jenny and her friends would have had a more pleasant evening in consequence, and I might have gone to bed in peace when I came home, but for those arrears of work. I am going to be myself, and do my own work, and anybody else who wants any done may hire it, for me. Why, all this crowd of engagements has really hindered me from being obliging instead of giving me chances to do kindnesses, and in a few

years I shall be too tired to think, much less to do anything. I 've got to be naughty in order to be really good."

"Glad of it," said the Poet, who had sauntered in, and had been listening. "I have been longing to see you become disobliging, it was your one chance in life. Go on. You 'll do some good work now;" and he carried the young man off to his study, and, as he said, gave him an ocean of bad advice, which he hoped that he would follow.

Boys and girls, are any of you behaving like Peterkin, and trying to be too good? If so, perhaps you need some "bad advice." Suppose you ask your fathers what they think.

GLASS.

Six-year old Mollie is a born housewife, and delights in taking her part in little household cares, partly because "it helps mamma," and partly, also, because it pleases herself.

Within a few weeks she has promoted herself to washing and putting away the glass used on the table, and makes a pretty little parade over her

work, polishing each goblet until it looks like crystal, and making each facet of the jelly-plates and salt-cellars glitter like a diamond. Not a bit of soap does little Mollie use, but after her glass, as she proudly styles it, is well rinsed, she washes it in a little ammonia and water, then wipes it very hard, and never sets a piece down until it looks its very best. This takes time, of course, and when all the glass is ranged on the shelf, Mollie usually finds that her mother, having superintended the clearing of the table, and seen that the dining-room is set in order, is ready to answer her questions, and this little inquisitive Mollie has always something to ask.

Yesterday, while trying to make a pressed glass tumbler look as well as a cut-class caster, and failing in the attempt, she began to feel a great deal of curiosity about glass, and when she and her mother went up stairs together, she wanted to be told all about it.

"You want to know where the very first glass was made," mamma asked. Mollie nodded, and she continued: "Well, I 'm sorry that I can't tell you, my dear. Nobody knows. There is a bit of glass in the British Museum, in London, — a little glass lion's head, almost four thousand years old, and there is a painting representing glass-blowers in an Egyptian tomb almost five thousand years

old, but who first made glass we do not know. There is a pretty story that once upon a time some shipwrecked sailors made a fire on the sea-shore, and that the bits of rock which they put under their kettle to steady it melted and mixed with the sand of the beach, and made glass; but it requires a much hotter fire than one can make in the open air with bits of wood to melt glass, so I do not exactly credit that story."

"*Melt glass!*" cried little Mollie, in surprise.

"Oh, yes," mamma answered; "every bit of glass that you ever saw, Mollie, was melted once, and could be melted again. It is no harder to understand than the melting of ice into water, and the freezing of water into ice. The clear white sand of which glass is made is mixed with some washing-soda and some broken glass, and then put into a pot of clay, and set in a furnace and melted. Now and then workmen dip long rods into the mixture to see if it be done, just as I would dip a spoon into jelly or run a knitting-needle into a loaf of cake, and when it is 'just right,' which it sometimes is not for more than twenty-four hours, the furnace is allowed to cool until the glass stiffens a little, and becomes like jelly, and then it is ready to be worked. And then — well, really, Mollie," said mamma, "I don't know what to tell you next, because there are so

many things that may happen to that soft glass before it is fit for use. The tools with which they work glass are almost the same that workmen had two hundred years ago, but they are employed much more skilfully, and so many things are made that I don't know where to begin. But ask me some questions, my little girl, to jog my memory a bit."

"Suppose you tell me about window-glass first, mamma," said Mollie, "and save the pretty things until the last."

"So you don't think window-glass a pretty thing, Mollie?" laughed mamma. "If you had lived in England three hundred years ago, you would only have seen it in church Sundays, unless you were very rich; and within a hundred years such clear, white window-glass as everybody can have now was so expensive, that very few persons had it at all. Until 1780, all the glass used in this country was brought from Europe, and really good glass was not made here until 1817. But to begin: there are three kinds of window-glass — crown, sheet, and plate. The first two are blown, but plate glass is cast."

"Blown?" questioned Mollie.

"Yes, dear, just as you blow soap-bubbles, only the pipe is four or five feet long. The workmen take a mass of glass on the end of this tube, and

whirl it about, blowing into it until it swells into a globe, and then they twirl it and heat it again and again until it becomes flat. Sheet glass is blown in a different way and made to take a shape like a bottle with two necks. These are removed, and the piece left is shaped like a stovepipe. How would you make a flat pane of glass out of such a thing as that, Mollie?"

This was too hard a conundrum for the little girl, and she only shook her head, and listened with wide open eyes, while mamma explained that the workmen scratched a line on the glass pipe and then laid it on a stone and put it into an oven, in which it soon softened, and opened out into a flat sheet. "You must remember, Mollie, that glass made in this way is inferior to crown glass," said mamma, "and neither blown nor crown glass is so good as plate glass. This is made by pouring the soft glass on an iron table, and smoothing it out with a great iron roller. The large plate of glass thus made is put into an oven, and left for five days and then taken out and polished. This glass is used for fine mirrors more than for windows, as it is very costly, but it is the only kind used for the very large panes that you see in the shops."

"Now tell me about the pretty things, mamma," interrupted Mollie.

"Beads will do to begin with, won't they?" asked

mamma. "Well, a great many very old beads have been found in different parts of the world, and all nations seem very fond of them. It takes two men to make them, you must know. One takes a mass of melted glass on the end of a blow-pipe, the other attaches a rod to it, and then the two run backwards in opposite directions, stretching the tube as they go, until it is as fine as seems needful. The beads are made by breaking off bits of the tube, and then they are put in a vessel with wet wood ashes and sand, and rubbed about until they are filled with this doughy substance, and then they are put in another vessel filled with sand, set in a furnace, and whirled round and round. This polishes them, and shapes them, and as soon as they are cleaned from sand, they are ready to string."

"Glass paper-weights are pretty," suggested Mollie.

"Very," rejoined mamma. "They are made by arranging several canes of glass so that their ends make a pretty pattern. Then these ends are enveloped in a piece of clear glass, and there is the paper weight. Each of these canes is made in the same way as the bead pipes, except that the workmen do not blow into them, but leave them solid."

"They pull them just as Bessie and I pull

molasses candy," Mollie said, with a little nod, meant to show that she understood the case. "You know, mamma, there are some pretty blue and crimson vases in Aunt Susan's sitting-room, and some lovely colored glass in church."

"Most of the color is produced by mixing certain things with the glass in the furnace," said mamma. "A stained-glass window is made of a great many separate bits of colored glass fastened together by lead and cement. The features of faces, and a few other small details, are painted on the glass, but only a few."

"Engraved glass, Mollie, such as you see in goblets and lamp-shades, is made either by scratching the glass with a wheel or by eating it with fluoric acid. The workmen who use the wheel begin to practise by making dots and lines just like children learning to draw, but they soon become very skilful, and can produce wonderful patterns. Their work shows the picture in ground glass on a clear ground, for the wheel roughens or grinds the glass, wherever it touches, and leaves a white mark. When acid is used, the article is first roughened all over, and then covered with a substance that the acid cannot harm, and then the workman draws a pattern on it with a steel pin, and then the article is dipped in the acid which eats into each scratch."

"Why," said Mollie, "I thought you could keep anything in glass."

"You can keep almost anything," answered mamma, "but you must have platinum or lead for fluoric acid. It is rather terrible stuff, my dear little girl, and would bite into your flesh worse than it bites into glass, if it had the chance."

"What makes you so much more particular, mamma, dear, about the things that you call 'cut' than about what you called pressed glass?" asked Mollie.

"Because the pressed glass is moulded, and costs very little, but after it has been cut, that is, has had all its edges ground sharp, and its whole surface polished, it is very dear. It is the extra work that makes cut glass expensive."

"Are n't there any funny things about glass?" asked Mollie, who was beginning to be a little tired, and to wish that she had not been so anxious for knowledge.

"There are some curious things," was the answer. "Glass can be drawn into fine threads and woven into cloth. It can be made into something looking like an ostrich feather, and into a wig of curly hair. When moulded into one shape it will enable us to see millions of miles further than we otherwise could, and in another form it shows us objects so tiny that we never should

guess at their existence. There are little drops of glass, with long tails, that fly into powder the moment that you snap the tails off; and the Germans use a certain kind of glass for soap, and wash wool with it. Glass can be made strong enough to bear very heavy weights; and glass balls, elastic enough to bound several feet into the air when dropped on an anvil, have been manufactured. But now, my little Mollie, convince me that you have been listening to me attentively, by giving me a list of the things that can be made from glass."

"Oh," answered Mollie, "there 's so many, I don't know where to begin. Well, windows, and mirrors, and tumblers, and goblets, and pitchers, and glasses, and bottles, and door-knobs, and casters" — ("Not castors," here interrupted mamma) — "and plates, and jelly dishes, and salt cellars —"

"And cruets, and vases, and lamps, and lamp chimneys, and lamp shades, and gas fixtures, and candlesticks, and paper weights, and boxes for salve, and artificial gems, and beads, and bugles, and buttons," continued mamma, as the little girl's tongue began to falter.

"And clock shades, and watch crystals, and — I can't think of any more."

Can you?

THREE QUESTIONS.

"MOTHER!" cried Jack rushing into the house with a wish which made him forget that doors have hinges, and that carpets wear out quickly, "may I ask you three questions, three hard questions that none of the fellows can answer?"

Jack has six brothers older than himself, so that his mother was not disturbed when he flung his books and hat into a corner, and then ran across the room to her without thinking to shut the door; she stopped sewing for a minute, pointed to the door, and the books, but said nothing. Upon which gentle hint, Jack retraced his steps and shut the door, putting away his books and cap, and even going to the glass and smoothing his hair before he came back a very quiet little boy, and again inquired, "May I ask you three questions, mother?"

"That none of the fellows can answer, Jack," quoted she. "Well, yes, you may ask, but I don't promise to answer."

"First," said Jack, reading from a very grimy piece of paper, "'Why is it an owl can see at night and can't in the daytime?'" Jack's eyes were very eager as he waited for the answer.

"If I should tell you to go and look straight

at the sun, what should you say?" asked his mother.

"I should say that I could n't; it would hurt," said Jack.

"Why would it hurt?" asked his mother.

"That I don't know," answered the boy; "but I should feel as if I were blinded, and the tears would come into my eyes."

His mother gave him a little hand-mirror, saying, "Tell me how your eyes look. Never mind about the lids or the lashes, but tell me about the eyes themselves."

"First," said Jack, slowly, "I see two white spaces shaped something like an almond, and then I see two belts of brown around two black spots like the rings around the bull's eye in a target. The brown rings and the black spots, and the white spaces, all move when I look towards the right or left, or up or down. Everything seems reflected in the brown rings and black spaces."

"Very well," said his mother. "Now go into that dark corner and look at your eyes, and then go and stand in front of the window and look again, and tell me what you see."

Jack obeyed, but he was forced to go to the corner and to the window more than once before he saw what his mother wished him to see, and realized that the black spot grew large as he

turned away from the light, and small as he approached it.

"You must know," his mother then said, "that the little black spot in your eye is called the pupil, and that it is really a little hole leading into a little cell lined with black. That part of your eye with which you really see is in this little black cell, and is called the retina; it only needs a certain amount of light to see anything, and any more than just enough injures it, and so, to keep it from being hurt, the little brown belt, which is called the iris, draws itself together and makes the little hole or pupil smaller. When you go into a dark place, the iris draws back and the pupil grows larger. Do you understand?"

Jack thought that he did, and said so. "And are the owl's eyes like mine?" he asked.

"Something like them," said his mother, "but not quite. The pupils of the owl's eyes are very large, and they admit a great deal of light, and they cannot be made small, as yours can, so that when one of the poor creatures is brought out into the light he feels as you do when made to look at the sun, and can hardly see at all. At night the great pupils gather in every ray of starlight, and the big bird, flying noiselessly through the air on his downy wings, can see the little field mouse and the small birds, that are his prey,

and can see them better than you could in the daytime."

"Mean old thing," cried Jack, "to eat a little mouse!"

"Don't be sentimental," said his mother. "You ate a little oyster the other day; I saw you. The mouse was made for the owl, and the farmers are very glad to have him eaten. But now that you know about the owl, Master Jack, please ask your next hard question."

"'Why is it,'" read Jack again, "'that a cat can see at night and in the daytime both?'"

"Because," said his mother, "the pupil of the cat's eye has an even greater power of expansion and contraction than ours. In a very strong light it becomes a mere thread, like a slit, and in the dark it grows very large. There are persons who say that they can tell the time of day by turning the cat's eyes towards the light and noticing the width of the pupil, but you would better let pussy alone, Jack, and not try any experiments on her. The little cell that is lined with black in our eyes is partly covered with a bright substance with rainbow reflections in the cat's, and that is why her eyes seem to shine in a room that is nearly dark. Now for question Number Three, Jack."

"'Why does cloth shrink when it is wet?'" propounded Jack.

His mother laughed. "Because it does, is about the only answer to that," she said. "Woollen or cotton fibres grow a very little shorter when dipped into water, and so all stuffs made of woollen or cotton shrink a little when first wet; but you must not think that cotton or woollen stuffs are wet for the first time after they are bought. They are wet more than once while making, but they are afterwards stretched, and pulled and ironed to make them smooth, and when they are fairly released from that smoothness, they shrink, as you call it; that is to say, they go back to their proper length. I have seen many kinds of woollen dress goods that would shrink without wetting. Some cotton stuffs not only shrink, but seem to grow thin when washed, because they were not only ironed, but dipped into a size to make them stiff and firm. Soft cotton cloths are always best, but you don't care anything about that, unless you mean to keep a dry-goods shop when you grow up. Do you understand all about the eyes now, Jack?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Jack. "The light goes through a little black cell into the pupil, and the owl has a shiny place in its eyes, and the cat — oh, yes! the cat tells the time of day by looking at its eyes."

"Oh, dear!" cried his mother, "no wonder your

teacher says that you need a book to study," and away she went to the bookcase, and brought Jack a book with some pictures of eyes and a clearly written description of them, and before he went back to school the next day Jack understood the matter pretty thoroughly, and what was more and better, he had had a little lesson on the difficulty of learning from hearing a person talk, and the small value of knowledge that seems to come easily. Now, when his teacher is giving an oral lesson, his ears and eyes are wide open, and he tries to remember exactly what she says instead of being satisfied with enjoying her clever, amusing sentences. It is doing him good, and will help him remember his lectures when he goes to college, but he finds it pretty hard.

LOUNGERS.

When Our Tender was a little girl she used to think that the boys had all the good times, but possibly that was because she wanted to join in their games and was not allowed to do so. Now she thinks that, even if the boys do have many good times, they also have many more tempta-

tions to have bad times than the girls do, and this brings her to what she wants to talk about, the habit of street-lounging prevalent amongst boys, and very good boys at that.

To begin at the beginning, there is nobody in all this world who has so little to do, who is of so small consequence to other persons and to himself, that he can afford to stand on the corner of the street and do nothing at all, and when he is there he is neglecting something that he should be doing somewhere else. We are not talking of the poor fellows who are out of work and out of money, discouraged by the thoughts of dear ones suffering at home, and hopeless of finding anything to occupy their willing hands, but of boys like those in that little group that Our Tender can see from her window as she writes. There is John, who has stopped on his way home from school, and who swings his books by their strap and occasionally raps them against the house, not greatly to their advantage; his dinner is waiting for him at home, and his mother's work will be delayed for the whole afternoon by his tardiness. There is Will, who has been sent out to do an errand, and is forgetting it, and will by and by go and tell the grocer to send up buckwheat instead of oatmeal, as his mother bade him. There is Rob, who was told to take his little sister out to

walk, and she is trotting about the park by herself, with her patient little nose very blue and cold, while Rob stands on the corner with his hands in his pockets. There is Ned, who ought to be at home working at his afternoon lesson, so as to be able to leave school early, to take his sister to a party. He stands doing nothing as complacently as if he knew everything in his books. They are a pretty group, are n't they? Nice boys, too, every one of them. If Our Tender were to go over and speak to them, every hat would come off in an instant, and they would all have something pleasant to say, for they are good, clever fellows, and fairly well taught, too, in spite of their lounging.

But what are they saying now? Are they talking about their games or their lessons? Are they even gossiping of dress, as they say the girls always do when they are by themselves? No, indeed, not a bit of it!

Says John to Will, giving his poor books an extra hard rap, "It 's cold to-day."

"Ya-as," drawls Will, and then there is profound silence, while a young lady walks past them.

"Do you know who that is?" asks Rob, and when John says, "No," the others all laugh as if the reply were very witty, and the young girl is made to feel a little uncomfortable. Then a dog

scampers by, and gives the languid group an excuse for calling him "Kyser," and whistling to him until he is out of sight, and then Will remarks, "I 'm goin' a-skatin' after school, 'nless it thors," which, being translated into the language that he would employ in the presence of his mother and sisters, means, "I am going to skate after school, unless it thaws." You will notice, children, that purity of accent is seldom to be found among street-loungers.

"Guess I 'll go too," drawls John, in a tone that does not indicate any great probability of his distancing other skaters.

"Skating 's no good," says Rob, and so on, and so on. Ned does not say anything. He simply leans against the house, and kicks the sidewalk, seeming to find as great pleasure in the exercise as John finds in rapping the house with his books.

"Well, where 's the harm?" somebody asks. "They are not doing any mischief."

No, they are not; but how long do you think it will be before mischief will not be found for such idle hands and minds to do? Half a dozen years from now, if you should see those same four boys standing on a street-corner, you would feel that their half-dozen years of aimless, foolish lounging had done them little good, and a great deal of harm. After half a dozen years they

would not be satisfied with asking any such innocent question as, "Do you know her?" but would audibly criticise the looks of the young ladies who passed by them. Moreover, they would all be smoking bad cigars probably, and would not be too particular about puffing the smoke into the faces of the passers. As for their language, it would be strange if its carelessness had not degenerated into slang and profanity. All this is simply to say that they would have developed a great deal in a very undesirable way, as loungers usually do. Ask your fathers what they think of boys whom they see lounging at the corners, and remember that the men of whom you will have to seek employment when you grow up will probably have the same opinion. Ask your mothers and sisters. They will probably agree with a clever little schoolgirl to whom Our Tender put the question, "What do I think of boys who lounge?" She said, "I don't think of such persons at all."

THIRTEEN CATS.

THIRTEEN introductions in two minutes! How would you like that, my dear boys and girls, especially if ten out of the thirteen persons set up

a loud outcry at the sight of you, and manifested a great inclination to examine the texture of your gown, to pull your bonnet strings, to look at your laces, and even to walk all over you? How would you like it if those ten insisted on your paying attention to them, and would not allow you to talk, or sing, or play games, or do anything while they were "in presence," as the old court chroniclers have it? Would you obey their wishes, devote yourself entirely to them, and care for nothing else while they were about? That was what Our Tender did, and she liked it, and so would you had you seen the ten. They were such darlings! Their eyes were so bright, and their voices so soft, and they were so playful and good-tempered, and they had such nice, fine fur, that Our Tender liked every one of those ten kittens, and she is going to see them again some day.

These ten kittens, and the three cats, their mothers, all live in one house, and they belong to two boys and a little girl, who, when Our Tender saw them, found very few things so interesting as the kits and their ways. Each family lived in a box of its own, and Jimmy, and Mary, and Johnny had, each in a different manner, striven to make these boxes beautiful in ways which it is to be hoped that the cats appreciated. Jimmy, who has always been artistic from the time when, at

the age of four, he spoiled a new suit by wearing it while painting a wheelbarrow with a mixture of carbolate of lime and linseed oil, borrowed enough paint from his father's studio to transform the outside of his cat's box into the likeness of a house with a very imposing door and two windows, and did not allow himself to be disturbed because both cat and kittens seemed quite unconscious of the outside decoration of their domicile, and made their way in and out of the place where the roof should have been, with great disregard for custom, and never seemed inclined to look out of the windows, although, with great tenderness for their feelings and small care for his fingers, he had bored a gimlet hole in the centre of each painted pane. Mary, a born housekeeper, had covered the outside of her box with a piece of patchwork originally meant for a doll's quilt, but given up to Susan Jane and her kittens without a murmur, and she had also made neat little tassels, and fastened them at each corner of the box, where they were exceedingly convenient for any kitten wishing to sharpen her claws, or to amuse himself with a little solitary play. Johnny had tried two or three kinds of decoration on his box, beginning with the intention of covering it with shells, then changing his mind in favor of paper roses, altering it again and

using plain paper, and, after all, leaving one side absolutely bare. Fortunately the kittens did not mind, but scratched their way in and out with perfect amiability over shells, roses, paper, or pine boards, never seeming to lose their temper, except when they found some of the Mary or Jimmy kittens in their places. When they did they made as much noise as their needle-like little voices would permit, and seemed to call all the other kittens and cats to witness that "such con-duct ne-ver was seen, was seen, was see–en." Mary declared that that was what they said, and if you had seen her cat, Susan Jane, drag her kittens out of the Johnny cats' box, and cuff their ears, you would have believed it. "What shall I do with you?" she seemed to say, as she carried them back to their own box, shook them, and tossed them in, while the Johnny cats mewed "Nev-er was seen," until their own mother came home and cuffed their ears, apparently to punish them for making too much noise to suit her taste.

"Almira is a very quiet cat," Johnny said, solemnly, as he introduced her, but, if quiet herself, she was the cause of quietness in nobody but her kittens, for she bit and scratched and fought with the other cats at every meal, scared the birds almost out of their wits by climbing the trees, and lying in wait for them, and flew at the dog as defi-

antly as if he could not have shaken her to pieces, with almost no effort at all. She did not mew, it is true, but there her quietness stopped. Susan Jane, on the other hand, mewed all the time. When her kittens ran away or when they stayed with her; when her dinner came early, or when Mary forgot it, and she had to go into the kitchen and ask for it; when the butcher's dog shook her, and when the canary was frightened at the sight of her; when anybody took notice of her, and when she was neglected, she mewed, mewed, mewed, until one wondered how her kittens ever slept. "It is lucky that they don't have to think," said Mary, looking at them while Susan Jane kept up her ceaseless song.

"My cat 's the one to think," said Jimmy, looking at Susan Jane with disfavor, and bringing out a little black and white cat for admiration. "Her name 's Araminta Priscilla, so 's to make up for her being so little," he said. "If she should n't grow any more, I 'm going to call her Sisthenes Cyrus. My father says I may, and that it will be ex-ex-ter-emerly ap-pro-priate." Araminta Priscilla was an eel-like cat; one of those that squirm and wriggle away from you, but as soon as you put them down, squirm and wriggle back into your lap, and stay there until you touch them, when they repeat the performance; her only other trait

was a violent dislike for Susan Jane, whose mewing she regarded as weak-minded.

The children told all these things to Our Tender while she looked at the kittens, and then wanted to know if she could not teach them a new game in which the cats and kittens could join.

"We have tried 'em walking in procession," said Jimmy, "but Susan Jane yells all the time, and Araminta Priscilla's kittens won't keep in line, and it 's discouraging."

"It must be," Our Tender said, as soberly as she could, and then, remembering an old "Atlantic Monthly" story, she said, "Bring me a cork, a newspaper, a kitchen chair, and two yards of string." Away flew the children, and back they came in a few minutes, and stood with attentive eyes while Our Tender tore the newspaper into strips, tied them together with one end of the string, fastened the cork to the other end, and hung them over the back of the chair, so that both cork and papers hung about a foot above the floor.

"Take the cats into the corners," she said, "and let the kittens have the first play," and the children obeyed; Susan Jane mewing, Almira scratching, and Araminta Priscilla squirming as usual, and Our Tender poked the kittens under the chair, and set the newspaper strips and the

cork in motion. In less than a minute the kittens were apparently tangled into a hard knot, from which little paws reached up to the swinging attractions above it, and out of which came the mews of Almira's kittens in chorus of "Ne-ver was seen — was seen — was seen!" Now and then a kitten would lose its balance, and knock over two or three others, but in a minute they would all rush back, and into the thick of the fight again, and hustle and reach for the prize, as if it were a very nice mouse or a tender little sparrow. You may guess that the three cats would not be "held" very long, while this fun was going on, and in a few minutes they jumped down, and dispersing the group with a cuff or two, began to have a little fun on their own account, while the kittens hovered about and seemed greatly interested. Susan Jane was determined to have the cork, but the paper boxed her ears so persistently that it frightened her at first, and when she became used to it, Almira climbed into the chair, pulled the cork up beyond her reach, and began playing with it. This was Araminta Priscilla's chance, and she improved it by pulling and clawing at Susan Jane's tail as she stood almost on the claws of her hind feet and reached for the cork. Susan Jane turned to attend to her, but seeing the kittens all ready to rush for the cork,

changed her mind, and jumped up in the chair with Almira. The kittens were not afraid of any cat as small as Araminta Priscilla, and they now rushed forward, when suddenly the two cats in the chair pulled the paper, string and cork down to the floor, and then the struggle began again. Please understand, boys and girls, that the cats all seemed to understand that this was play, and that even Susan Jane's mews were not angry. Our Tender would not have encouraged her little friends to look on at a fight, but here everything was done in good humor, which is not always the case when thirteen children are playing together. The fun might have gone on until this time, apparently, if the children had not grown tired of it and taken away the bone of contention. It was very funny to see how, when deprived of their plaything, the cats resumed their authority, and marshalled the kittens back to their homes with an air which seemed to say, "You 've got to mind, if you did see me at play just now."

Do you happen to have thirteen cats at your house?

SOME WORDS ON LANGUAGE.

THERE are so many persons in the world who dislike to accept anything on the authority of another person, even when it concerns a subject of which they know absolutely nothing, that Our Tender was not surprised the other day to receive a note from a girl who said that she "did not see why she might not use the words in William Cullen Bryant's black list," which she had found in some newspaper. Now, William Cullen Bryant, you must know, was a learned man, a great poet, and the editor of a newspaper universally acknowledged as an authority in respect to the English language, and Our Tender, who saw the "black list" many years ago, never thought of appealing from it, but took it for granted that when Mr. Bryant had the list made out, and forbade his men to use any of the words in it, he knew what he was about perfectly well, and so she looked over the list with an eye to its reasons for the first time, when her girl's letter came, and these are the words which she saw in it:—

Aspirant.
Authoress.
Being done, built, etc.
Bogus.
Bagging, for "capturing."
Balance, for "remainder."
Collided.
Commenced, for "begun."
Couple, for "two."
Debut.
Donate and donation.
Employee.

"Esq."
Gents, for "gentlemen."
"Hon."
Ignore.
Inaugurated, for "begun."
Indorse, for "approve."
Initiated, for "begun."
In our midst.
Jeopardize.
Jubilant, for "rejoicing."
Juvenile, for "boy."
Lady, for "wife."
Lengthy.
Loafer.
Loan or loaned, for "lend" or "lent."
Located.
Measurable, for "in a measure."
Obituary, for "death."
Ovation.
Pants, for "pantaloons."
Parties, for "persons."
Poetess.
Portion, for "part."
Posted, for "informed."
Predicate.
Progressing.
Quite, prefixed to "good," "large," etc.
Realized, for "obtained."
Reliable, for "trustworthy."
Repudiate, for "reject" or "disown."
Retire, for "withdraw."
Role, for "part."
Roughs.
Rowdies.
Secesh.
States, for "says."
Taboo.
Talented.
Tapis.
The deceased.
To progress.
Transpire, for "occur."
Vicinity, for "neighborhood."
Wall Street slang generally: "Bulls, bears, long, short, flat, corner, tight," etc.

Well, Our Tender will tell her correspondent why she should not use these words, and, although her reasons may not be so strong as Mr. Bryant's, they are strong enough to convince her that the list is not a word too long. "Aspirant" is a poor substitute for candidate. "Author" means either a man or a woman, and "authoress" is as useless as "cook-ess," or as "poetess," which appears elsewhere in the list. It is true that you can find it in the dictionary, but so you can find slang and profanity, and every combination of letters that it ever entered into the heart of man

to make and pronounce. "Is being done" is a very common mistake for "is doing," and even for "is done." While an act is going on it is doing; when finished, it is done; it is never being done. Some persons will say, "But how strange to say 'A ship is building! A ship cannot build!'" Very true, but it can be built, and until the building is finished it is building. The "is being" mistake is young yet, but it is stoutly defended by those more familiar with cheap newspapers than with Shakespeare. A good answer to make to persons who tell you that the ship cannot be building is to ask them whether it was being built yesterday, and will be being built to-morrow, and should have been being built last week, and — but this is usually enough for them. "Bogus," like "bagging," "roughs," "rowdies," "loafer," and "secesh," is slang. "Balance" for "remainder" was not allowed because the former word is only used in a particular part of book-keeping, and is never rightly employed anywhere else. "Collided" was to be replaced by "came into collision with," or "ran against." "Commenced" is a weak French substitute for "began" or "begun." "Couple" implies union, and should not be used when "two" is all that is meant. "Debut" and "employee" and "tapis," are French, and can just as well be supplied in

English. They mean "first appearance," "hand" or "person employed," and "carpet" respectively.

"Donate" and "locate" and "predicate" are not to be used because "give" and "place" and "say," — all good, sensible words, are what their writers usually mean. The first two words are of very little value at best; the meaning of the third is strictly technical. "Esq.," and "Hon." are misplaced titles in this country, but the latter is generally given to persons in office, and may be permitted when addressing letters to them in their official character. It is not proper to use this word, or the word "Reverend" without prefixing "the." "Indorse" means to write the name on the back of a document; Mr. Smith does not "indorse" Mr. Brown when he comes forward to speak in his favor at a public meeting. A President is said to be "inaugurated" on the fourth of March, and then he begins to perform the duties of his office, but he does not inaugurate the performance of his duties, nor, when he goes to bed, does he inaugurate the act by taking off his boots, like the hero of a novel lately published in a city which Our Tender does not name, lest all the girls and boys who live in it should be angry. "Taboo" is a South Sea Island word and has no meaning which a citizen of the United States is bound to

know. When the priests of these islands declare an object or a person "tabu," that object or person is sacred and cannot be touched; it is set apart or forbidden. The idea is quite foreign to our modes of thought, and the word is generally substituted for "not allowed" by those who use it. "Initiated" means to induct into duties, or into office, or into an order, but it has been misused for "began" by certain persons who have a vague idea that, as an "initial" letter is the letter at the beginning of a word, "initiate" must mean something like begin. "In our midst" is the phrase which pompous persons use instead of "among us;" it means nothing. "Ignore" is a law term, and means "to declare ignorance of;" it does not mean "to act as if you were not conscious of another person's existence," although it is very frequently used as if it did. "Jeopardize" is not a word; some brilliant creature once put "ize" after the first two syllables of the word "jeopardy" and thought that the result meant something, but it does not. "Juvenile" means "youthful," not "youth" nor "boy." "Jubilant" is too nearly Latin to be as good English as "rejoicing." "Lady" does not have the same meaning as "wife," and is most frequently employed by a man who is not quite certain that his wife is a "lady." This is a word only to be used when one

wishes to refer to the manners and breeding of some woman, although by courtesy all old women are called "ladies" by those who owe them respect, and children are sometimes taught to style all grown women "ladies" in order to make them suitably deferential in speech to their elders. "Gents," so styled by themselves, always call women "ladies," just as they always speak of "pants" when they mean trousers. Our Tender once heard a "gent" speak of "that lady who committed a murder down in Connecticut." "Lengthy" should be "long." "Ovation" means a Roman triumph; Mr. Smith does not have an ovation when his friends give him a surprise party and a "parlor rocking-chair." "Quite" means "entirely;" many persons use it instead of "not entirely." "To progress" should be "to go." "Talented" is no more proper than "geniused" or "abilitied." "The deceased" is a would-be elegant phrase for "the dead." "Vicinity" means "nearness" and not "neighborhood." The other forbidden words are sufficiently explained in the list.

There are a few phrases in common use which the boys and girls will not use if they wish to be accurate. They will not say "You had better," or worse still, "you better," instead of "You would better." They will not say "I should

have liked to have gone" instead of "I should have liked to go." "Any place," "some place" and "no place" should never be used for "somewhere," "anywhere," or "nowhere." Words and forms of speech peculiar to one locality are not used by careful speakers. The "Do tell," "I want to know," "Right away," "Straight off, "and "I calculate," of the North; the "I reckon," "Right smart," "Done going," and "Been a-ring" of the South; the "Made a strike" and "Claim" of the West, are carefully pruned away from the speech of those who aim at using pure English, as Our Tender trusts that all her boys and girls do. It is the work of many years to learn how to speak properly, but the work is well worth all the time and attention which you can give it, not only because a noble language is a precious gift of which you should all try to make the best, but also because careful speech is often a passport to the society of the well-bred and the clever.

SO VERY FUNNY!

A BOY, not one of Our Tender's boys, but a boy who, doubtless for our good, but not at all to our pleasure, has been visiting us, was sitting at

the window the other day when the Doctor came in, and, finding nobody else in the study, began to read, only to be interrupted in a few minutes by a peal of laughter from the boy.

"And what might be the matter with you," asked the Doctor, looking at the youth with no great favor, for the tone of his laughter had that peculiarly ugly sound which all persons who have had the care of children dread. One hears it when a knot of boys cluster in a corner to whisper about something which they would not mention to their mothers, and which their fathers would punish them roundly for mentioning at all; when a swarm of healthy, happy fellows are teasing a poor cripple, or gibing a drunken man, or tying a tin kettle to a dog's tail, a mean cackle of what pretends to be mirth, with suggestions of all manner of evil in it. The Doctor's keen ear recognized it at once, and, as his mind was turned away from his reading by it, he determined to give the boy a lesson. "He 's a little fellow yet," he thought, "and he will hate his own evil when he sees it. What 's the fun?" he asked, speaking the last sentence aloud.

"Oh, there 's an old woman over there with a a big basket on one arm and some pieces of board under the other, and she does walk so! And she looks so funny! She bends to the left to balance

the basket on her right arm, and then she forgets to make allowance for the boards, and they hit a lamp-post or something, and then she curls up somehow, so funny! And then she stops and hitches herself together! Oh dear!"

"There is a great deal of fun going on in the street all the time if one have eyes to see it," observed the Doctor, blandly.

"Yes. I never look out without seeing something comical. Look at that tall woman and little man walking together; are n't they queer? See that boy with the hole in his left elbow! See that fellow limp! What long steps that girl takes! Look at that deaf man trying to talk; see him bend his head and squirm for fear he 'll lose a word! Folks are so amusing!"

"And are n't they funny when the wind is blowing!" exclaimed the Doctor.

"And when the snow is on the ground! My! I sit at the window and whenever anybody falls down I *just holler*."

The Doctor allowed "just holler" to pass without comment, as he was not intent on correcting the boy's English, and then said, rapturously: "But if you want to see real fun, you ought to come with me some morning! I see more in half an hour than you can find by looking out of the window for a week! Come."

It is not every day that the Doctor gives invitations, and the boy felt highly honored and accepted his with great satisfaction, and when he drove away the next morning he smiled at all of us so happily that we liked him better than we ever had before, and hoped that the Doctor would not teach him a very hard lesson.

Meanwhile, the boy was enjoying the ride, and was trying to make it pleasant for the Doctor by pointing out all the limping dogs and lame horses and teamsters with bits of cloth twisted about a bruised hand or finger, and worked himself into such fits of laughter that when the Doctor drove up to a large brick building, and the two stepped out and walked up a gravelled path to the door, the boy was so full of mirth that the kind Sister of Charity who opened it said, "How happy you seem, my dear!"

"Ain't her bonnet funny?" demanded he, in a loud whisper, whereupon the Doctor, pouncing suddenly upon him as the Sister turned the corner of a passage and was out of sight for a moment, said, "Look here, young man, I'll point out the fun during the rest of this pleasure excursion. You keep still!" Then, taking him by the hand, he made him walk briskly along, and in a minute more the Sister was showing them into a large room in which were many white beds.

"This is Peter Green," the Doctor said to the boy; "Peter broke his arm the other day, and has to have it fastened into wooden splints now. He can't move it. Is n't he funny?"

"And I am that," said Peter, with a good humored grin. "I look like a chicken with a broken wing."

"You 're a pretty chicken," said another man, who limped up on crutches. "Look at my ankle, Doctor. It aches all the time, and I hop, hop, hop, like a hen on a hot griddle."

"And you 'll hop, hop into bed and stay there for a week," said the Doctor as he looked at the swollen ankle. "You 've walked too much. Is n't that funny?" he asked the boy. "See how much bigger his ankle is than it ought to be! Is n't he too queer! And here 's my Johnny Connell. Johnny has a big burn on his shoulder and back where the tea-kettle fell on him. Is n't that a funny sight?" he asked, laying bare what seemed to the boy to be raw flesh. "And see! This fellow cut his cheek and has to wear a plaster that spoils the expression of his face. Is n't he funny? And here's a fellow with — Halloo!" and the Doctor caught the boy and made him sniff ammonia and gave him water to drink.

"Don't like my fun, eh?" he asked.

"Oh, take me away!" the boy whispered.

"Not I," said the Doctor; "stay and find out what these people are, now you understand that they are not funny. You see, my friends," he said, raising his voice a little, "this little fellow never saw real trouble very near until this morning, and it 's too much for him. Peter, you take care of him while I go the rounds." And away walked the Doctor from bed to bed, leaving everybody looking brighter as he went, while Peter and the boy made friends.

"I don't think you 're funny now," the boy said, after a long stare. "And I know what the Doctor meant by bringing me here. I have been laughing at lame folks, and he wanted me to see a lot of them together so as to make me think."

"Well, lame folks are funny," said the gentle Peter; "but when you know the pain they 're in, you can't laugh at them for crying. I had a sprain once, and I must have looked ridiculous walking about and dragging my foot behind me as if it belonged to somebody else; but did n't it hurt! When I see a lame man it brings back all that old ache, and I can't laugh at him."

"Well, I can't help having a sense of humor," the boy said, beginning to defend himself, as he recovered from his faintness.

"A sense of humor is a fine thing," Peter answered, "but I heard a clergyman say once that

it needed a deal of charity to balance it. Women have n't any, they say, and they have more charity and gentleness than we. Many 's the time when I 've been laughing, and my wife has sat as solemn as any owl, and I 've known all the time that she had more charity than I for the poor creature that made me laugh, and I 'm trying not to see fun in anything that is n't pleasant to other persons."

"And very sensible of you, Peter," the Doctor said, coming up and leading the boy away to the Sister, who, while the Doctor went to the other wards, showed him all over the great hospital, from its little chapel to the big kitchen and tiny dispensary, and gave him a glimpse of the oculist's waiting-room, in which sat a score of poor creatures with diseased eyes, waiting for the good physician to come in and give them some of those minutes that were golden for his rich patients, but which cost them nothing, and last of all she led him into the parlor and gave him a glass of lemonade, and talked to him until the Doctor came and they drove away.

The boy was very silent until the Doctor asked him if he wanted any more fun, and then he laughed shyly and said he "guessed not."

"You did n't understand, you know," said the Doctor, looking at him kindly. "Things looked

funny to you because you did not read them right, but you won't make a mistake again."

"I hope not," said the boy; "but the Sister's hood was funny. There!"

The Doctor smiled again. "I should as soon think of calling a saint's halo 'funny,'" he said, "and so would you, if you only knew what that hood means to the poor and suffering in countless lands. My boy, St. Vincent bade the Sisters wear that hood because it was worn by the peasants of his country; it was simply a badge of humility at first, and attracted no especial attention in France, but when they wore it into other lands, the ladies found that it added to the daily burden of their lives that of being somewhat conspicuous, but they bore it firmly and bravely. You would not dare walk across the street with one of those hoods on, but they, for the sake of their vow, wear it meekly everywhere. It seems beautiful to me, perhaps because I have never seen it except as the frame for a calm, peaceful, good face; but I remember that when the Sisters of this country became connected with the French order and had to wear that hood there was a great outcry among their friends. Everybody said 'Poor things!' except the little boys, and they said 'How funny!' but the Sisters put on the stiff white things, and we soon became used to

them and learned to love them as we had learned to love the black hoods. Ah, my boy, there is nothing funny in a sign of perpetual self-denial, any more than there is in a sign of suffering or discomfort, and you 'll learn it by and by."

And after the boy had gone away we said to each other that he really was a little better for the Doctor's lecture, and that he might be very agreeable by next year, when he is coming again.

"ONE OF THE R'S."

Would you not like to hear of a new amusement, an amusement which costs absolutely nothing, and in which all can become proficient? Would you not like, if yours be one of those unfortunate family circles in which yawns begin to show themselves by half-past seven, and become almost incessant at nine o'clock, to be able to put them to flight? Some persons seem to think that this cannot be done without music, and excuse themselves for being stupid on the ground that they have no piano, as if cleverness and liveliness were invented by Crestofalli and improved by Chickering. Each one of you has a more

wonderful instrument than any piano that ever was made, and if you will learn to play upon it, there will not be much yawning while you practise. The instrument is your voice; you must learn to read.

There; now that you have finished your indignant cries of "Think we know how to read already!" "What does she mean?" "Pretty advice for persons who have to study ever so many hours a day!" listen a bit. You all know how to read to yourselves, doubtless, but how many of you can read aloud, except in a manner that is agonizing to your hearers? Most of you can probably assume what the little school teacher who discussed the matter with Our Tender the other evening, called "the Third-Reader manner;" "and when I hear it," she said, "I want to flee to Mesopotamia. In its way, it is not bad. It is very distinct, very deliberate, and very careful; it shows a fair knowledge of the sounds and powers of letters, but it is about as inspiring and about as pleasing as the regular rhythm of a flail. I know two or three men with minds not developed beyond the Third-Reader period, who use this manner in what they call their own con-ver-sa-tion, and oh, what bores they are! and how their families admire them and their con-ver-sa-tion-al pow-ers! and how they admire themselves!

and how de-lib-er-ate-ly they give you the benefit of their wondrous wisdom! We do n't want the Third Reader in private life.

"And we do n't want the Fifth Reader, either. I know a public speaker who always uses the Fifth Reader manner, no matter to whom he is talking; he tries it all; orotund tone, and median stress, and all the rest of it, and asks whether or not his overcoat has been unpacked for the winter with as much form and care as if he were putting a question in Parliament. The very finest reader I know is a mild old gentleman, who does not look as if he would kill a fly, although his fun has despatched whole swarms of little venomous, stinging human creatures. His voice is not very powerful, and he plays no tricks with it, and uses no devices to make its apparent volume greater. He is very careful to use it exactly right, to breathe just as he should, and never to overwork his vocal chords. He articulates each word distinctly, but with no appearance of effort. He can say 't,' and that is more than most persons can; and he can pronounce 'u,' even when it has a 'v' before it, without turning it into 'oo'; he never drops his final 'g's', and neither does he transform them into 'guh,' as my poor youngsters do when they render 'The boy was going,' 'The bo-oy wuz going-uh,' and look to me for ap-

plause. His power of expression is really something marvellous; and although all of us can't have that, you know, how nice it would be if the children would only try to imitate somebody like him when they read! Never shall I forget hearing him recite Fordyce Wilson's 'Old Sergeant,' when that poem was new and unhackneyed. It begins, you know, with the words which the old soldier, lying on his death-bed, addresses to the surgeon; broken phrases such as he would naturally utter as he aroused himself from a swoon; and then goes on with his declaration that he knows that he is dying, and his description of the vision of battle which he has had while unconscious, and then come his last feeble words of patriotism, the charge to his son, and his dying ejaculation. There is not a verse, not a word that does not tell even in type; but, as the lines were recited, we who heard were made to realize that the old sergeant was feeble, not only with age, but with the burning fever of his wound; that upon him was falling the cold indifference of dying, in which nothing on the whole round earth seems of any consequence, and that although his memories of battle might arouse him for a few minutes, still he was dying, dying, and the life-flame, even if it flickered for a minute, was going out forever. We felt all that as we heard the reader, and I

don't think that we thought much about his voice, but afterwards, when we tried to produce his effects for ourselves, we were surprised to remember how very little difference there was between his loudest and softest tones, his deepest and his highest pitch, and if we never learned how to recite 'The Old Sergeant' as he did, we did learn to be moderate in everything."

"Then don't you believe in practising stresses and tones and pitch?"

"Oh, yes, I believe in an immense amount of practice on all of them, for the benefit of the throat and lungs, if for no other purpose. The sound of a word and the associations which you connect with it will cheat you sometimes so that you cannot tell whether you give it the right tone or not; but if you can say 'A' or 'Ah' so that it has any meaning, and can be sure of saying it exactly as you wish, then you may confide in your ability to pronounce a word or phrase effectively. It won't hurt your boys and girls to practise all winter in saying 'A' so that it asks a question and answers it, and then uniting the two sounds and prolonging each so as to give the pretty effect we call median stress; then saying 'A' with a prolonged, even utterance, and then in a trembling tone. When they have tried to do all of these things both in a high tone and in a low

tone, and have found how it tires their throats, they will begin to realize that there is some work in learning to read, and when they can do them well, their throats will be much stronger, and their speaking voices much more agreeable; but mind," said the little school-teacher, "nobody must ever hear them use these stresses when they are reading. They must glide from one to the other so easily, so lightly, and so gracefully, that no one can possibly notice them You know Chopin used to play Bach for three days before he rendered his own compositions in public. Nobody heard a note or strain of Bach at his concerts, but they heard the result of his practice in the precision and delicacy with which he rendered his own quaint fancies. Your stresses and tones must tell in the same way. Do you see?"

Do you? Are you willing to try to teach yourselves, in order that you may read the newspaper to your father and the magazine to your mother, and the fairy tales to the little folks with grace and expression? It will cost you nothing but time, for you will find all the necessary instruction in your school readers, and you can criticise yourselves and each other. Do you think that your parents may object to hearing you practise? Well, it won't be any worse than the scales, whether rendered vocally or instru-

mentally; and Our Tender does not believe that they will mind, if you be reasonable, and she knows that many of them will be glad to help you. Suppose you begin to learn to read.

A TROUBLED GIRL.

A SMALL party assisted in opening the letters the other evening; that is to say, the Doctor, the Poet, and the Young Lawyer had the privilege of cutting the envelopes open, and hearing Our Tender's remarks on the letters, and seeing a line or two of some that were so nicely written as to make it seem a shame not to let somebody besides the printer know how very well they looked. They were all in good spirits. The Young Lawyer, who, you must know, is cousin to the Lawyer, and is a somewhat sarcastic person, had been, as he phrased it, "gunning for May-flowers," and had not only brought back a big bunch of the lovely pink blossoms, but also the wildest of wild good humor; the Poet had just disentangled a sonnet that had been misbehaving itself for a fortnight, and the Doctor had decided that the sickest of all his patients was going to recover, and Our Tender

with the Mayflowers and her letters, felt quite as ready for fun as the others, until she read the last of them, and then she looked so sober that everybody asked the reason.

"One of the girls in trouble," she answered, "She wants advice."

"Send her to me," said the Young Lawyer. "I never see persons who want advice, I regret to say."

"She says that it is the advice of a good, kind, sensible person which she needs," replied Our Tender.

"That points directly to me," he responded, not in the least abashed; "she is evidently a fatherless and motherless young woman, who lives so far from church that she is only able to speak to her clergyman once a year, and so it is only through you that she can hear of good, kind, sensible persons. In me you behold the object of her hopes. Where does she live, — Arizona?"

"Boston. She signs herself 'Boston Girl.'"

"And does not know any sensible persons! What a wreck our civilization is! It is fortunate that I was here to-night. Is there no other signature?"

Our Tender shook her head. After all that she has said to the boys and girls it really vexed her to receive an anonymous letter from one of them.

"Oh! Well, then she has no rights that we are bound to respect. Anonymous writers never have. Read it." The other two said the same, and Our Tender obeyed.

"'About a year or two ago,'" she began, —

"Come!" said the Young Lawyer, "there is a fine indefiniteness in that phrase! 'About' a year 'or two' ago!"

"'I met a gentleman upon the street'" —

"'In' the street is good enough for me," murmured the Poet.

"'And without the slightest intention of flirting or anything like it, we both looked at each other very much'" —

"That 's a complicated piece of business," said the Young Lawyer. "Now, if each had looked at the other, I could understand it."

"I shall stop reading if you don't cease making comments," Our Tender cried. "This is my own girl, please remember."

"She says she is," objected the Doctor. "She is an anonymous girl, at best. Don't stop."

"'Upon turning around, I found he was looking around at me. Well, time went on, and I seen a great deal of him'" —

"'I seen' is good," interpolated the Young Lawyer.

"'And we used to half smile as we met. I

then learned that he was a near neighbor, and was a gentleman in every respect ' " —

"She might have guessed that from his half-smiling," said the Poet. "Had he not been a 'gentleman in every respect' he would probably have seated himself on the curbstone, and have roared outright."

"'He occupies a respectable position in one of our leading houses.'"

"I make his employers my compliments on their young man," growled the Doctor.

"'I have learned to love him very dearly, and did even before I knew him to speak to'—Well, she is amusing! He must be an amazing young man, this occupier of a responsible position in one of our leading houses!—'and now I wanted to tell you how I became acquainted with him.'"

"By all means," said the Young Lawyer. "I should like to know how she contrived to bring about an introduction for him."

"She dispensed with it," Our Tender answered; "she says: 'One day, while I was walking down town he was behind me and stepped up and spoke, and I allowed him to, and I walked down with him; and since then I have walked down with him as often as two or three times a week (I work down town, and my dinner hour is the same as his), taking care never to join him, but he al-

ways joined me; and if he happened to be in front he would keep turning around until he saw me, and then stand and wait for me to come up to him.'"

"Allow me to say," remarked the Young Lawyer, "that there are four parallel streets traversing Boston from north to south, and that if she had chosen to walk down by herself, it would have cost about three minutes' time to change her street."

"Then she says again that she loves him," Our Tender said, "but declares that she does not know what his feelings are, and closes by telling me that she is past eighteen and that he is nearly thirty, and asks for a criticism, spelling the word with a 'z.' She writes on both sides of her paper, but, being anonymous, she did not expect publication."

"I should like," the Poet declared, very deliberately, "to see the 'gentleman in every respect' carefully, thoroughly, and elaborately kicked."

"Consider," said Our Tender. "If I tell my girls and boys of that speech, what will they think of us?"

"Well, I amend it," said the Poet. "I should like to have him handed over to the police for speaking to a girl whom he did not know."

"She 'allowed' it," interposed the Young Lawyer.

"Yes, but she was only sixteen or seventeen, and possibly knew no better," said the Poet. "He was twenty-eight."

"She ought to have known better."

"Yes, but there are so many persons who do not know what they ought! He is probably handsome; very likely dresses well, and seemed a charming creature to her, poor little pussy!"

"I would drop that letter into the grate," said the Young Lawyer. "Don't take any trouble with her."

"But I shall," Our Tender said. "She is one of my girls, or says she is, and perhaps, although I hope it is not so, there may be another as silly as she, who may read what I tell her and stop before a 'year or two' of folly. I am going to tell her to avoid the young man sedulously and ingeniously. To go down town earlier; go home earlier; to change her dinner hour; never to walk alone if she can help it, and to go to work by any street except those in which he is accustomed to see her. If, as I suspect, he be only amusing himself, she will never see him again, and, of course, she will not wish to do so. If he be anything like 'a gentleman' in spite of his impertinence in speaking to one of my girls without an introduction, he will think that she is ill or that she is avoiding him, and in either case will make

inquiries and take means to become acquainted with her in a proper way. If she should meet him in spite of her precautions, and if he should speak to her, she can simply tell him that she has decided not to give him the privilege of walking and talking with her any more until he goes through the formalities proper in making acquaintance with a lady. He will certainly respect her more and he will like her none the less for this."

"And I would like to point out to her," said the Young Lawyer, "that if he should insist upon speaking to her, she may claim the protection of the first policeman that she sees."

"Or the first decent man," said the Poet.

"You don't say anything," Our Tender remarked to the Doctor.

"There is nothing to say," he replied. "If your girl had really wanted sensible advice, she would have asked some person whom she knew for it. She wished to be told something in accordance with her own wishes, and so she came to a person whom she did not know, hoping to be petted and helped out of the trouble into which she has come by her own foolishness. She is doing wrong; she must stop. I would be less lenient than you. She should nevermore be girl of mine, if she ever spoke to the man again. He is not a

gentleman; if he had been he would not have spoken to her if she had 'half-smiled' for a century. He would have seen that she was silly and thoughtless or ill-taught, and would have avoided her. Gentlemen do not presume because women are not well-bred. Don't you see that neither one of these two, even if they should be properly introduced, can ever be sure of the other? How is he to know that she is not 'half-smiling' at somebody else; how can she tell that he is not speaking to somebody and walking with somebody without an introduction? She is young. Let her begin life by dropping this creature's acquaintance."

"Let us join in a chorus of 'So say we all of us,'" said the Young Lawyer.

And they did. Would you have sung, too, had you been there, Our Tender's tall girls, of whom she expects so much in womanly graces? Poor little Boston Girl! We must be very sorry for her, but please notice, dear girls, that after that first involuntary glance, she had the case in her own hands, and need never have "half-smiled" or looked at the young man again. Had she guarded her eyes, as Our Tender trusts that you do, he might have looked at her, but she would never have known it and would not be unhappy now, and "doubtful about his feelings." Do not forget her, but do not imitate her. Walk modestly but

fearlessly in the street. No gentleman will ever stare at you or speak to you if you meet him every day for a lifetime, and no one who is not a gentleman will speak to you twice unless you choose that he should. Do not allow yourselves to think that any one will dare to talk to you without an introduction. Be ladies in mind as well as in action, and hold yourselves above the thought of impertinence. You will be respected only as you respect yourselves. Nobody is going to take you for anything better than you take yourself to be.

And, girls, you think that men are less severe on your small follies than women. What do you say now that you have heard Our Tender's friends speak of the Boston Girl?

SHE WOULD BE A SINGER.

HERE is a letter lying upon Our Tender's desk, a long, carefully written letter, with each word so well chosen and so neatly penned that it is evident that the person who sent it took great pains with it, and considered it of much importance, and so humble in spirit that it is impossible not to respect the writer, and still it is an unpleasant

letter. Why? Why, because it shows Our Tender that there is a young girl somewhere in the country who is almost sure to have an unhappy life.

What is the trouble with her? She has a voice. So have you all? Yes, but they are honest, simple, work-a-day voices, good enough wherewith to call your brothers to breakfast, or to ask the shopman for ten yards of blue cashmere, or even to sing your little sister to sleep; but did any newspaper writer ever talk about your "lark-like warblings," or your "thrilling rendition" of the "High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire?" Did anybody ever say that "the liquid sweetness of your tone lingered in the memory like harp notes," or that you "reminded your hearers of Alboni and Jenny Lind?" Probably not, but you see these things have been said of Our Tender's little correspondent, and that they appeared in papers of no great reputation, and that they were very evidently written by kind men who wished her well, but were not educated critics, makes no difference. The mischief is done, and Miss Pussyanita is longing to become either a public singer or a public reader, and asks Our Tender's advice. Shall she study by herself or at some conservatory or school of oratory? Shall she take private lessons of some great professor? Would it be well for her

to go abroad, or should she be patriotic and complete her education in her native land? Finally, would Our Tender advise her to be a singer or a reader, "since it seems to be conceded, that she has ability enough to become either?" Dear Pussyanita, Our Tender never saw you, and probably never will: she does not know whether or not there is a lark-like tone in your voice, or whether you are any more like Jenny Lind than she herself is like Martha Washington; but if you were a human nightingale and a female Roscius, she would still say, "Do not strive to become either reader or singer. Between your quiet youth, and the time when you might hope to stand before a large audience, its queen by virtue of your genius, there stretch years of trial of which you have no more idea than you have of the sorrows that beset the life of an inhabitant of China."

In the first place, there is the work. Our Tender does not think you are lazy, but do you realize that in order to learn to sing well or to read well you must give up years to almost unremitting practice, resigning social pleasures, reading, a thousand pleasant things which are now a part of your daily life? That you must pass other years in working for very little money, travelling long distances in all kinds of weather, and exposing your health to dangers of all kinds?

That even if you should succeed, if every one should come to agree with the kind men who have already written of you, you would still have to work hard to retain your skill, and would have to give your performances at the time set for them, whether you were sick or well? You have, according to the newspaper slips, which you send, appeared in two "complimentary entertainments." Our Tender knows all about those things, and three-quarters of the times when she buys a ticket for one, she thinks how much happier the girl to whom it is given would have been if she had had a voice that would not fill a twenty-foot room, and would have been disagreeable to everybody but her friends. There is the person who manages the entertainment, usually a sharp music teacher, intent upon advertising himself by showing off a clever pupil; there is the "volunteer talent," intent on showing itself off, and permeated by a lively sense of favors to come when complimentary entertainments shall be showered upon it, and the beneficiary of the evening shall be "volunteer talent" in her turn; and there is the beneficiary herself, more awkward than she ever was in her life, wearing a gown much too fine and ten years too old for her, and showing that her poor little best, creditable although it may be to her, is very poor indeed; and then there is

the audience, applauding kindly and injudiciously, overlooking blunders, and all fibbing together when the performance is over, and assuring the heroine of the evening that she was in excellent voice, and that they never heard anything better; and, lastly, there are the honest remarks made on the way home, when the ticket-buyers regret their vanished dollars, and declare that they will never go to such an affair again; and the quarrels among the "volunteer talent," which are seldom healed until the next complimentary entertainment brings about a truce. This kind of affair is no more like a real concert than it is like a circus, as Pussyanita will find out if she should ever try to give one. Persons cannot be coaxed to buy tickets for a real concert unless the singers have ability; and after they have bought them they will not applaud unless they are pleased. Really good singers seldom "volunteer," except for a charitable purpose, for they can neither afford the time nor the work; and, lastly, critics speak their real minds about real concerts, and are very chary of allusions to larks or any other wild-fowl, although they may imply something about geese and cats, if a singer be very bad.

Again, has Pussyanita thought anything about the expense of becoming a singer or a reader? The charges of a really fine music teacher or elo-

cutionist are very large, and there is no limit to the number of lessons that may be needed. It is almost impossible for a girl to earn much while she is studying, and it is essential that she should live well in order to preserve her health and strength. A long residence in foreign cities is often thought requisite, and an expenditure of many thousand dollars is absolutely necessary. Can Pussyanita command this?

Lastly, there are peculiar dangers that beset a girl who wishes to obtain her living by using her voice in public, dangers of a kind that no bravery can avert, and which it is no honor to encounter, and the girl who risks them is exceedingly foolish, to use no stronger phrase. If she can take all her lessons under her mother's guardianship; if she can go abroad under her mother's care; if she can afford to pay immense sums for advertising, and can be her own manager, she may escape these dangers; and if she have genius, may in time overcome all opposition and jealousy, and win success, but of how many women who sing or read is this the history?

If Pussyanita, instead of writing to Our Tender, had consulted any one of the two or three American ladies who have made a name for themselves by their singing, they would have spoken even more plainly than Our Tender has, for

they know every step of the rocky way by which they have climbed to fame, every thorn that stretches out to tear the garments of the wayfarer. "I studied music fifteen years; I gave up my home; I took possession of my mother's life, and made her travel with me; I spent thousands of dollars," said a lady to Our Tender only the other day. "My voice was praised by the critics of Milan, of Paris, and of London. My engagement for Paris and St. Petersburg was ready for my signature, and then I found that the conditions of accepting it were such as I could not fulfil and retain my self-respect, and then 'influence' shut every door in my face. I was cut off from my career, and here I am back in my native land with my voice, it is true, but with no foreign reputation, no chance to be anything but a music teacher, receiving no higher pay for my lessons than if I had studied lazily and comfortably at home."

"Here I am in San Francisco," wrote a charming little actress to Our Tender last month, "and I shall have to sing myself home again, for not a penny have I of all the money that I have made for myself and my manager. I started, as you know, with a contract for $25 a week and my expenses, but after a while my manager suggested that I would better become his partner, and now

he has run away with the profits, about $4,000 I think. I am in no actual need, because some kind persons have given me a home with them, but how to get back?" And this little lady had been taught very thoroughly, and had been very sensible, and had been content to begin on a small salary until she could earn more; had made all her own dresses; had been the best of good little daughters; and there she was with the breadth of a whole continent between her and home. Would any other profession have been likely to reward her so ill?

But you say, this one has $5000 a night and that one has $2000. Yes, and the girls in the chorus have $10 or $12 a week, and they all meant to be Nilssons just as you do. There are prizes here and there on the stage, and one actor or singer or reader picks them up, and for the ten thousand others there is nothing but vexation of spirit and a cruelly hard life. The only woman justified in trying to become a singer or an actress is she whose teachers, without solicitation, constantly urge her to go on the stage; who finds that she can accomplish things with her voice which even her rivals admit that they cannot surpass; and even she must submit to all manner of hardship, like the two ladies of whom Our Tender has told you. Be careful, girls, not to mistake a wish to be

admired for a genuine vocation for the stage, and, even if you have one, count the cost before entering upon it. There is such a thing as aiming too high.

WITH A MANNER.

"The tailor and the elephant,
Were going to a ball;
The tailor took his goose along,
The elephant a shawl.
The tailor, bowing, said, 'Go first;
The road won't do for two.'
'Oh, no,' replied the elephant;
'I'd rather follow you.'

"The tailor and the elephant
Stood bowing there till night;
For each to take the precedence,
You see, was too polite.
The ball went on without the pair.
Perhaps I may be wrong,
But I believe they kept their stand,
And stayed there all night long."

WHAT do you think of that for a story, dear boys and girls? Our Tender happened to encounter it in a juvenile magazine just at the moment when she was amused by the contrast between two of her acquaintances, — one a gentleman whose manners are of that exquisite kind which

we call "of the old school," and another, a very young man who has had the misfortune to grow up with very little training, although he has what is usually called a good home, and who is trying to place a veneer of elegance on a body of ignorance with an effect that would be amusing, were not the spectacle of misdirected effort so very sad. Both of these persons come into a certain office together so frequently that comparison between them is almost unavoidable, and it would be really instructive for the boys and girls to see them. The old gentleman, who is, by the way, a clergyman of great learning, salutes everybody, but seems to do it almost unconsciously. He was taught when he was young that it was proper to acknowledge the presence of any persons whom he might find in a room on entering, and the idea of thinking how he looks while doing it never comes into his mind. The young man, on the contrary, was allowed, until he went to a public school, to walk into the presence of his elders without removing his hat, and to say whatever he had to say gruffly and directly; and, even after his teacher had compelled him to behave respectfully in her presence, his mother allowed him to be rude to her, and he really had no manners at all until a "Book of Etiquette" came in his way and inspired him with the idea of assuming "a man-

ner," and now he wears a manner all the time. Some days it is a dignified manner; that is when he fancies that somebody has not been quite respectful to him; sometimes it is frivolous, or, as he would call it, jocund; that is when he wants to make persons ask him why he looks happy, so that he may tell about the party which he attended the night before; sometimes it is neither jocund nor grave, but it is always something, never the easy, colorless manner of the old gentleman. He says "Good morning," in tones so studied that naughty persons feel a longing to mock him, instead of answering him civilly, and he begins to talk with so many carefully made gestures, he is so elaborate in his displays of surprise, or displeasure, or enjoyment, that he and his manner are very wearisome. Again, when one visits the old gentleman, one finds a chair placed for one, and is put perfectly at ease in a minute; when one calls on the young man he says: "Permit me to offer you a chair: I con—sid—er that this is com—fort—a—ble," and waves one into it with an air, and sits down in his own in a way that suggests that he is making phrases about it in his mind, and is saying: "James received him with gentle dignity;" and then one wants to laugh, if one do not care anything about him, or to scold him if one do, and either

way, one feels uncomfortable. When the old gentleman meets a servant, no matter whether it be boy or man, he is perfectly courteous, although strict as to having work done properly. When the young man meets anybody who is unlikely to retort, he practises his manner, and makes such speeches as this: "My dear boy, will you bend your powerful mind to carry this letter to the post-office?" Or, perhaps, a poor orange girl offers him her wares, and he brings his manner forward again, and asks: "Is this fruit from the land of the orange and myrtle?" and confuses the poor child, who feels that his manner is contemptuous without knowing why or how. When the old gentleman goes out of a room he leaves it with perfect grace; the young man departs as stiffly and clumsily as a jointless wooden doll, trying to say something smart as he goes, and carrying his manner down stairs very heavily, and three times out of five, as soon as they have gone, somebody compares them.

What is the secret of the difference between them? Why, the old gentleman's manners are a part of him, by long practice, and also because they simply express his feelings towards the world. The young man's manner is a deceit, wilfully assumed to make him seem something which he is not, and, like all deceits, it sits awkwardly

upon the wearer. If he would behave as he feels, he would be more graceful, and he should try to feel well enough to be quite graceful. An earnest wish to please others will make him self-forgetful, and, when once he has become so, it will be easy for him to perform simple, every-day acts of civility easily and properly, and to go on from that point until he attains self-possession as perfect as that of the old gentleman. So long as he feels any concern as to what others are thinking of him, and so long as he feels that he is superior to anybody, so long he will be awkward and ridiculous. Love and humility are the essence of politeness, and even the origin of the forms of politeness, as you will find if you study into the history of the matter, and unless you have these qualities, no amount of "manner" will give you good manners. The trouble with the tailor and the elephant in the verses was that each was anxious to seem polite, and neither really cared a penny for the other. Do not be like them.

DOLLIES.

Do you own a doll? Of course you do, if you be a girl, and it is more than likely that you own twenty; and, even if you be a boy, you may have one. Our Tender knows a boy who is greatly attached to a knit doll that can be twisted and bent, and dipped in the water, and thrown out of the window without injury, and she has seen a boy, eight years old, who really loved a little wooden doll as much as if he had been a girl; so you boys need not look scornful and go away because we are going to have some old-fashioned doll-stories this week. You would better stay and hear them, and learn how much girls love their dolls, and why it is that they do not like you to make fun of them, or to play that they are Indian captives, and consequently to be pierced with arrows, burned, and otherwise tortured. Then you can make allowances for our feeble minds, and not tease our poor dolls, and hurt our feelings.

Girls can be as cruel as boys in their treatment of dolls sometimes. Our Tender remembers a girl who had a very pretty doll to whom she was much attached, but whom she treated in a very naughty way. One afternoon her little

cousin came to play with her; and, after the two girls had "visited," and "kept school," and "gone shopping" with the doll, and dressed her in everything available, from a night-gown to a riding-habit, they had a slight disagreement. The little hostess said something, and her guest repeated it after her. "There now," said the former, "you 've mocked me; and I heard an old lady say that if you mocked anybody the ravens would pick your eyes out." This was a rather grave misquotation of Scripture, but the girls did not know that, and sat and waited for the ravens to come, and when they did not, the little cousin said, "Let 's play that Theresa has mocked somebody, and pick her eye out." The work was done in a moment, but the poor doll was a really dreadful object, and the two girls cried at the sight of her, but were so frightened at their own naughtiness that they did not dare to ask anybody to put the eye back for them, and separated, feeling that they had a wicked secret to keep. Theresa's mistress was very kind to her the next fortnight, giving her the nicest little doll's suppers, dressing her in the neatest clothes, and putting her to bed with great care; but one day a sharp-sighted aunt asked, "What 's the matter with Theresa's eye?" and the whole sad little story had to be told. The girl had a very solemn

warning about the naughtiness of playing at wickedness, and was shown that it might make her so careless that real sin would come easy to her, but all the talk was not so effective as the memory of that miserable time, during which her poor Theresa had looked so doleful. She was always good to her dolls after that, and kept several of them until she was far too old to play with them, because it seemed cruel to throw them away, or give them to poor girls who might not be able to give them as nice clothes as she had always provided for them.

When Our Tender was a little girl, very small dolls of black china were supposed to be the proper thing for servants in doll houses, and a girl, who had been reading about Southern plantations and the negro slaves, rather outshone all her playmates by coaxing her mother to buy her six of those dolls, dressing them in blue and white striped cotton, and making them hold up the train of her best doll's best gown. This young lady, we were informed, was "Edith, the planter's daughter," and we thought that she looked very Southern and very proud as she stood on her father's verandah, represented by a row of big spools about as high as her knee, and wearing a white gown and a pink sash. The six little darkeys afterwards did duty as gnomes in a small

fairy play taken from a book; and you should have seen what a beautiful floating fairy a white china doll made, when hung by a thread from the chandelier, and surrounded with clouds of pulled cotton batting! The stage upon which the performance took place was the inside of a soap box, and when the scene was set with six black dolls digging into black cambric, supposed to be coal, with wooden tea-spoons, supposed to be spades, and when the fairy was nicely hung in place, exactly where she could dispense blessings upon them, there was no shifting of scenery until the play was over. The audience sat on chairs, and looked down on the stage in the Greek fashion, as the big brother of one of the girls said, and the brilliant young person who arranged the play did all the talking for gnomes and fairy.

One of the girls who came to the play had a wax doll, that most costly and vexatious of playthings, always certain to be melted by fire or hot sunshine while still fresh from the shop, and yielding up her flaxen curls at the smallest pull, and after all the bad gnomes had been crushed under the black cambric, and all the good ones had received pearls and diamonds from the fairy, somebody asked why Alexina Cimarosa Jeannette, as her mother called her, might not be dressed as Queen of the May. Her mother had no objec-

tions, neither had she; or if she had, she foolishly suppressed them, and we dressed her up in a great deal of grass and dandelions and stood about to see her made the Queen, and "hailed her Queen of May," and tried to get up a May-pole dance about a clothes' pole, and failed; and then we laid her down and began playing hide and seek. Alexina Cimarosa Jeannette was alone for a minute or two; and while she lay there our goat came along, and, mistaking her for one of the bunches of grass that we used to give him, tried to eat her. She could not scream, but she was so soft and sticky that she could fasten his teeth together, and when next we saw him he was shaking his head wildly and trying to drop her. She was a mere wreck of a doll by the time that we rescued her, and the goat would not touch a bunch of grass for months. Poor Alexina Cimarosa Jeannette!

There was a girl in our class who had thirteen paper dolls distributed in different parts of her desk, and kept them there all the time, much to the wonder of some of us who would have been caught by our teacher if we had dared to do such a thing, although the dolls were hardly bigger than a five-cent piece, and were cut out of tissue paper, so that they took up no room worth mentioning. That girl would stand up to read with a

doll under her thumb, as she held her book open; and those of us who sat behind her would gaze at her in an attentive way that must have been very encouraging to our teacher, but which in reality only meant profound interest in the doll's fate. Once she fastened a doll inside her inkstand cover with a wafer, and it was nothing unusual for her to have six lying in her pen rack in an apparently careless heap of paper scraps.

The rubber doll which could be dropped with impunity was much admired among us; but her complexion had a way of scaling off and making her look like a huckleberry pudding, and the fictions invented to account for this loss of beauty were amazing. Spotted fever and small pox were the usual excuses; but one girl said that it rained ink on her doll, and another declared that hers had had the plague, — "the regular London, King Charles II., burning of St. Paul's Cathedral plague," she would explain with historical enthusiasm. The plaster dolls, who had a fatal faculty for getting themselves shut in doors, and seldom had a whole shoulder or an unbroken nose after two weeks' existence, were usually considered as the victims of scarlet fever, this tradition dating from the time when one of the girls heard her mother say that "scarlet fever was a dreadful disease, and always left some other disease be-

hind it;" "and if another disease, why not a cracked shoulder or nipped nose?" we argued.

But the most remarkable of our dolls was Gertrude Isabella Clinton, who, by a neat compromise, took the names of the good and bad heroines in a book of which we were fond. Gertrude Isabella had a plaster head and shoulders, and a slightly twisted cotton body, and her clothes could be put on and taken off, and were fastened with real buttons and hooks and eyes. Gertrude Isabella came when all of us cousins were rather too old to amuse ourselves with simple housekeeping, and the gift of a very large black lace veil decided her fate. She wore a low-necked and short-sleeved orange-colored dress and a black silk apron, but that made no difference to us, as long as we had the veil; and every day of our lives we played at making a nun of that doll. Our mothers did not know it, and we ourselves did not understand the impropriety of imitating a religious ceremony, and we continued the amusement until we happened to read how Lord Preston's little daughter saved her father's life by going to Queen Mary and begging her to pardon him. The picture illustrating this tale represented Queen Mary as wearing a morning wrapper fastened by a cord and tassels; and, as one of us had a cord and tassels which had hitherto

been of no use in our plays, Gertrude was a nun no more, but wore the black veil as a sign of grief for her father's imprisonment, and knelt before the owner of the cord and tassels, who did the Queen to the best of her ability, and certainly looked as regal as the queen in the picture. Gertrude Isabella at last passed into the possession of a little friend too young to respect her for her good qualities or for her varied history, and was broken into small pieces very soon.

Dinah was a good doll and was never broken, because, being made of black cambric stuffed with rags, there was nothing about her to break. She had coral red lips, very big eyes, and a calico frock with the tightest sleeves ever seen before the days of jerseys. This frock looked very well on Dinah, but nobody was ever content to let it stay upon her. Each little visitor always wanted to take it off; and the task of putting on the sleeves was always too much for them, and so fell to Dinah's mistress. As her mother had a rule, "No supper until the baby-house is in order," the little girl almost hated Dinah sometimes, and used to wish that it did not make her feel mean to pinch the stiff black arms that would not go into the tight sleeves; but then nobody else had a black rag doll, and one must pay for luxuries.

But it made no difference whether the dolls

were china, paper, rubber, or plaster, boys, we loved them, and the uglier they were the more we cared for them, and the more we resented any slights offered to them. A girl really loves her doll, not as you love a ball, or a bat, or a top that has done you good service, but because it seems to her almost like a little, helpless girl who is dependent on her; and when you hurt the doll its little owner's feelings are not like yours when your favorite toys are injured, but more like what yours would be if somebody should attack your little sister. So, boys, when by any chance you play with the girls and their dolls, be gentle with them, and fall into their little fancies, as you expect them to fall into yours when you play horse, or soldier, or any of your games.

QUACKS.

The Doctor came in the other evening in a small tempest of wrath. He has attacks of this kind, now and then, usually on account of something wrong said or done to somebody else; and we are all very respectful while they last, for who knows — he might give us something very bitter

and unpleasant to take if we were not. So we gave him the easiest chair, and put a shade on the lamp, and drew the screen before the fire, and hushed the baby, and made everything as peaceful and quiet as we could, hoping that his surroundings would react on him, and that he would be pacified and happy; but scarcely was he seated before he burst out again with, "The whole blundering lot may be sick again for aught I care."

"Certainly," Our Tender answered, hoping that he did not know how she blundered, and took the pills in place of the powder, and the powder in place of the pills, for two days, and wondered why they did her no good.

"I should think it was 'certainly,'" he answered, "but perhaps they won't. It will be just the luck for them to get well, and then they will say, 'Oh, how lucky that we sent for Dr. Quack!' and they will think forevermore that I don't know my business. Madam, they have been taking a quack medicine!"

"Oh!" said Our Tender.

"Yes, ma'am," said the Doctor. "There were three of them sick in the family, and they sent for me, and I saw what ailed them: their house is very unhealthy; and I left prescriptions for each one, and told them to have certain alterations made in the house. To-day I called to see how

they were getting on, and the mother smiled and said she, 'Doctor, we are doing pretty well, thank you. We 've had the house put in order and we are taking' — I 've forgotten what she called the stuff; but the very name of it would have told anybody who knew anything about medicine, that it was a humbug, because it represented a combination that no chemist could make; and, if it had contained the things that it pretended to contain, it would have been poison to her, for they were precisely what she did not need. However, I looked very mild — what are you laughing at, Madam?

"I looked very mild, and said I, 'Madam, you could n't have done a worse thing for yourself or your children.' 'You don't mean it!' said she; 'perhaps, then, I would better take' — and she named a medicine which is absolutely non-effective, except for the alcohol which it contains, and mischievous because it is given in cases in which alcohol would be injurious. Said I, 'Madam, I congratulate you on your advancement in the science of medicine;' and then I came away, not to let her see I was angry."

"Well," said the Poet lazily, "what 's the use of this disturbance? You knew that there were quacks in the world, you knew that persons took their medicine. Why be vexed about it?"

"Of course I know it," shouted the Doctor,

"and it 's their persistence in being in the world that vexes me; and the persistence of persons who take their medicine, and sometimes don't die of it, as they ought. Madam, a true physician reverences his profession, and cannot bear to see it profaned. How would you like it, sir, to see them trampling over that beloved muse of yours? How would you like for some fellow to pass off vile weeds as the choice blossoms of Parnassus, eh?"

"I 'ld not mind," said the Poet, more lazily still. "I 've seen dozens of them; and, as an abstract matter, it does not trouble me, whatever wrath I may have about their accounts with their publishers."

"Well, it 's a nice frame of mind you 're in," the Doctor cried. "You talk as if a man ought to be patient with wrong-doing, and another day you 'll rave about evil-doers in the most ferocious way."

"Certainly, I 'll condemn them," said the Poet, "but I do it with perfect faith that they 'll be swept off the face of the earth pretty soon. I 've seen so many drop out of the way, one after another, that now I simply stand and wait to see them pass; and they always go. It would surprise me if they did n't. Your quacks will go too, but medicine will live."

"It is n't medicine, but myself, that 's in question," answered the Doctor. "I want to live to see these fellows found out."

"Well, you 'll do even that," replied the Poet. "There 's an uncommon quantity of the element of mortality in humbugs, and one may always hope to outlive them."

"Did you ever hear anything so absurd?" asked the Doctor, turning to Our Tender.

"I don't consider it absurd," said she, and then she told him of several humbugs that she had encountered in her lifetime, and had seen depart like shadows; "but the greatest humbug," she said, "was a girl."

"Naturally," remarked the Poet.

"A little girl," said Our Tender severely. "I went to school with her, and for three years I thought she would never be found out. She was very pretty, and very engaging in her ways, but very stupid; and when I was promoted into the class with her she stood rather low in it. After a time we became rather intimate, and she studied hard, and we both began to stand pretty well in the class; but what a life she led me! If my examples were done first, she would slyly rub them out and say, 'Do them over, and then we 'll be through at the same time.' If I failed in my lessons, she always looked exultant; but if she

failed, I was expected to sympathize. She would pinch and kick me under cover of our desk until I was nearly wild, and look so gentle and sweet all the time that nobody suspected her, and I was punished for disorder when I was simply trying to avoid being tortured. At other times she would be very charming and pleasant to me ; and, being a goose, I could not bear to quarrel with her, but kept on enduring her pranks, although between love and resentment I felt like a slave. I had to help her in her lessons ; and she was so shrewd and self-possessed that she made a better appearance at recitation than I did, and my teachers began to think me dull. Suddenly we were sent to a new school. I found new acquaintances ; she had to make her own way. She soon dropped to her proper level, and my first humbug was out of my path. But that is only half the story. I think, too, that there is an uncommon quantity of mortality in humbugs. I had not heard of my schoolmate for a dozen years, but the other day she stopped me in the street. I did not know her. All her pretty looks had gone, and oh, how shabby she was ! I used to think, when she tore my frocks and laughed at my collars and sneered at my ribbons, that it would make me entirely happy, if, when we were grown up, we could only meet some day when I was

looking very nice and she was poorly dressed ; but my childish mind had not conceived a difference so great as that between her thorough shabbiness and my dress, although it was only plain. She looked like a humbug, and I found afterwards that her shabbiness was the result of her being a humbug. She had lost all her friends and had fallen into deep misfortune, and there did not seem to be any way out for her. Of course, I knew the theory that falsehood is shortlived before ; but I have believed it since that day, and I really watch to see humbugs punished. Now you know, Doctor, that, where one quack medicine succeeds, hundreds fail, and that the ill-gotten gains of successful quacks seldom bring them long happiness."

The Doctor did know; and he told several stories about men who had lost great sums in trying to sell some worthless compound as a cure for all diseases, and of others who, having succeeded, either lost their money, or saw their families seriously injured by it. "But, perhaps," he said slyly, when he had finished, "you 'll tell me how to console myself when I see healthy persons making themselves sick with quack medicine, and sick persons dying because they will take it."

"Nobody dies who is fit to live," said the Law-

yer, who had dropped in while the Doctor was telling his stories. "Some die because their bodies are worn out, and some because their minds have not force enough to keep their bodies and souls together. No sensible man ever died of taking quack medicine, and the world can afford to lose a silly person better than it can afford to support him. Don't fret, my medical friend."

And the Doctor called him cold-blooded. What do you think they would say to you, girls, you who read the advertisements of patent medicines and then take the stuff? Perhaps you do not know that real doctors, men who have been given the title by institutions of learning, are bound to tell each other of the discoveries which they make, and not to make any profit for themselves by the sale of patent medicines. Perhaps you do not know that nearly all of these advertised remedies are made by ignorant persons, who either deceive themselves and think that their nostrums are good, or, what is more common, mean to cheat you and all buyers. No medicine will cure all diseases; few will cure many diseases; and, when you hear of one which pretends to cure all or many, you may be pretty certain that it is a humbug. If it be advertised, it certainly is, and the best that you can hope from it is that it may be made of something having no influence at all on the

body, and that it may only injure you in pocket, by taking twenty or thirty times its value from your purse.

TOO SYSTEMATIC BY HALF.

Dear boys and girls, did you ever meet anybody who had a passion for systematizing everything? Our Tender has recently visited a person of that kind; and, if the force of example were half as strong as the books say that it is, she would be hard at work collating, and indexing, and arranging everything that she owns, from newspaper slips to bonnets and gloves. Order is an excellent thing; but it is possible to have too much of it, to be bowed down beneath it until one is almost as helpless as those careless persons who never know where anything is or ought to be. When Mrs. Griselda began talking, it seemed as if she must be a wonderful woman. First, she said something about the Land League, in which everybody takes an interest, of course, and then she remarked, "I have every leading article and every letter on that subject that has appeared in the New York papers."

Now that, you must know, children, means an

array of reading which, if arranged in book form, would fill a long, long shelf in a library; and anybody who has read it all must know a great deal, although some of it is incorrect in substance. So Our Tender looked at Mrs. Griselda with great respect, and said, "And when did you ever find time to read so much?"

"I did n't read it," said the lady loftily. "I collected the things and catalogued them, and put them in envelopes with their names on the outside, and the names of the papers from which they were cut, and arranged them with cross references, so that if I want to look up any point at any time, I can do so in a few minutes; but I have n't read them. Have you been paying any attention to the 'Jeannette' matter?"

Now the "Jeannette" matter, and the bravery of the little band that fought with ice and snow, is one of the things which no woman of any sensibility can speak coolly; and so Our Tender said a great deal in praise of the gallant fellows, and Mrs. Griselda listened attentively.

"It must be interesting," she said, "but it took so long to arrange the slips that I have not read them yet. Come and see my desk."

Our Tender went; and, children, that desk will haunt her until her dying day. There was drawer upon drawer stuffed full of envelopes, each drawer

with its table of contents written on a bit of stiff cardboard carefully laid on the top of the envelopes; there was a range of pigeon-holes, each labelled and provided with its list of contents; and there were little bundles of slips, all carefully labelled; and there were scrap-books with indexes occupying pages; and there was a big "General Index" to desk, pigeon-holes, bundles, and scrap-books; and it was all so neat that wax seemed a poor thing to which to compare it.

Mrs. Griselda looked at it with a happy smile, and went over it carefully, pushing the papers into order here and there, brushing away dust and making the neat neater; and Our Tender admired without stint, saying, "How much you must know!"

"I have n't read many of them, you understand," Mrs. Griselda said, "I only collect them so as to have them ready if I should want them. Some day I may write a book; then how useful they would be!"

"What are you going to write? A novel, or a story-book, or something instructive?"

"I don't quite know," answered the lady, "but you see I have quantities of material for almost anything, and all nicely arranged. I read once of an English novelist who indexes everything,

and he is very successful; but I don't believe that his collection is much better than mine."

"There is almost everything here," Our Tender said, as she looked at the desk again, and sighed to think that hers never would resemble it while there was any work to do, but would be the scene of almost daily revolutions and of devastation that would sweep pounds of rubbish into the waste-basket only to make room for other pounds to come.

"Yes; when I find time to read it, I shall doubtless learn a great deal," said Mrs. Griselda, "and then perhaps I can decide about my book."

Before her call was over, Our Tender saw Mrs. Griselda's closets; and, although she thinks the indexing of the desk was not a very wise piece of work, she did admire those closets heartily. What do you think, girls, of having a little slate tablet fastened to the inside of each closet door, with a bit of pencil hanging from it, and a list of the things in the closet written upon it?

"When I take anything away altogether," Mrs. Griselda said, "I cross its name off. When I only take it away for a day or two, I put a little cross against it. And then, you see, I have cards on the ends of all my boxes, with lists of contents written on them, so that I never have to search through them to find out what is in them.

When anything is worn out, I cross its name off the card; and so I don't go about saying, 'Why, I thought I had this or that.' "

Do you, girls?

Our Tender said a great deal in praise of the closets, and she thinks that it might be well for the girls to try to arrange theirs in the same way, but she would be sorry if she thought that any of them were likely to have a desk like Mrs. Griselda's. Are there any of you who are preparing something of the kind? Are you more eager to own books than to read them? To buy tools than to learn how to use them, boys? To coax pieces from your mothers than to make dolls' frocks of them, girls? If you be inclined to behave like this, you only lack Mrs. Griselda's exquisite sense of order to be like her; for you are content to have the materials for learning, for working, for producing, without using them. What better are you than the miser who stores up gold, simply for the sake of keeping it? You hoard your little wealth as foolishly as he, do you not?

"BETWEEN MEALS."

"THREE meals a day and no luncheons, rain or shine," was the rule in an old-fashioned house at which Our Tender used to visit, and sometimes she fancies that she would like to see it enforced in some families with which she is acquainted. What do you think about it, boys and girls? Do you like candy and gum and nuts and pickles and pickled limes and figs and dates and prunes, and do you want to eat them at all kinds of odd times? Do you like to make visits to the cake-box and the bread-jar and the apple-barrel, and to go about munching the spoil gathered thence, keeping your jaws in incessant motion, and talking, when you do talk, in a choked and muffled way? If so, you will not like this Chat; for in it you are to be told that such conduct is neither gentlemanly, ladylike, nor healthy.

Suppose, girls and boys, that your day's work consisted of performing three set tasks, which always came to hand at regular hours, and which you could only complete properly and to your own satisfaction by steady, assiduous application to work; and suppose some day your employer should say, just as you began your labors, "Here, stop a minute, while I give you something else to do,"

and should add a little to your burden, and should keep doing it at intervals of five minutes all the morning, so that when the time for your second task came around, your first should not be half done. Suppose he repeated his conduct in the afternoon, and kept it up all day, compelling you to work until late at night, — don't you think that you would be pretty cross? And if he should behave in this way day after day, don't you think that you would soon become worn out and useless, and would have to drop your work altogether? But in what way but this do you treat your stomach, that good servant upon whom you impose three tasks daily, and then disturb him by sending him extra work at unreasonable times? While you are devouring all the good things which you find on the table, he can do little but to receive them; but, as soon as you have finished, he begins the work of changing them into blood, only to be hindered in a few minutes by the entrance of a quantity of candy or an apple. "What do I want of that?" he would cry, if he had a tongue; but having none, and no other weapon of defence, he can only remain perfectly quiet until the candy or apple is comfortably settled in its place, and then begin again. No sooner is he fairly busy, than a flood of ice-water is poured over him, with an effect as reviving and enlivening as that which would be

be produced if a similar torrent were to fall into your mother's kitchen some "baking-day." The poor stomach calls upon the veins to help him, and they take the water away in a minute or two, and once more he addresses himself to labor; and then peanuts begin to walk in, one at a time, and another season of enforced repose follows, and although, thanks to your teacher's sharp eyes, there are sometimes intervals of half an hour during which he is not disturbed, your dinner-time finds him still busy, and cross enough to make you irritable, although you do not know the reason why. The afternoon is a repetition of the morning's performance; and your stomach is fortunate indeed if you do not coax some nuts from your mother and eat them during the evening, to keep your poor servant trying to work half the night when you are asleep.

Now you know, or ought to know, that Our Tender believes that boys and girls, and especially her boys and girls, should have plenty to eat, but she thinks they should eat it at the table. If they have made an extraordinary exertion, and feel really hungry, let them take a piece of dry bread, and not a very big piece either. When Our Tender was a little girl, bread and molasses was an appointed luncheon; and a kind old voice that is now hushed forever used to say, "If you do

not want bread and molasses, you cannot be very hungry;" and, "Put on your bib, and sit down at the kitchen table, and eat properly what you do eat;" and, as a result of this shrewd policy, there were very few luncheons, and an excellent appetite when the regular meal-time came.

Then, again, it is uncivil to eat in company; and you are in company in the streets, in the horse-cars, in school, at your work. It is perfectly proper, of course, for you to take your regular luncheon at recess, or your dinner at the noon hour, without concerning yourself about your companions; but it is not polite to devour dainties without sharing them with anybody, and, if you stop to think you will not do it again. If the things be nice enough to tempt you to eat, they must tempt everybody who sees them, and your selfishness may lead to the actual discomfort of others. Furthermore, there are very few girls or boys who do not look ugly with a nut or a lump of candy tucked into one cheek, and you have no right to make your appearance unpleasant. And—whisper—the boy or girl who eats peanuts, especially freshly roasted peanuts, in a horse-car is an unmitigated nuisance. As for persons who eat apples or candy in the street, "just to show that they are independent," what is the use of saying anything about them?

Nothing will convince them that their boorishness is not really noble, or that those who refuse to imitate them are not the downtrodden slaves of conventionality; but Our Tender hopes that she will never find you following their example, and that you will do your eating at the table, for the sake of politeness as well as for the sake of health.

THREE LITTLE COOKS.

HAVE any of the girls had the cooking fever? If they have, perhaps they will like to hear what Mrs. Fuller told Our Tender, the other evening.

"I don't know which of my three girls had the fever the worst," the lady said, "but they were all wild about cooking; and, in an evil hour, I promised to let them manage the kitchen for a month. They decided that each in turn should be mistress of ceremonies for a week, and that the last week should be given up to the cook who we decided had done her work best; and, when this was settled I went up stairs, and sat down to consider what I should do with my leisure, and made out a list of visits and fancy work that would have occupied me a year if I had done nothing else.

That list, by the way, is in good order now, with very little crossed off from it; for, before I had been up-stairs half an hour, Kitty's brown head peeped around the door, with, 'Mother, how long does it take to boil peas?' and then Jenny came up to know whether or not 'lemon jelly would stiffen up in three hours if set on the ice the minute it cooled,' and Minnie came to ask where about twenty different cooking utensils were to be found, and I had to think about as much in regard to the dinner as if I had prepared it myself. Still, I was physically rested, and went to the table feeling very cool and comfortable, while my little cooks were flushed and heated. They had tried to roast beef; but, in their anxiety to avoid cooking it too much, they had kept down the heat of the oven so carefully that there was not much choice between the outside cut and any of the others, and they had refrained from trimming the joint, so that its effect, as it lay in the dish, was rather ragged and queer. The potatoes were slightly overdone, and there were little lumps in the gravy, but we agreed that rare meat was wholesome, and we ate the custard pudding, which was really good, and were thankful.

"The next day I was informed that we were to have croquettes, partly to use up the remains of the roast beef, and partly that my daughters might

have time to rearrange my closets, in which they found a distressing lack of system. They intended to place everything so that it would be perfectly easy to find, and so as to save all useless steps, — two objects which they did not consider that I had attained by my old-fashioned methods. I said nothing to this, for I don't think that one woman ever can arrange another's kitchen for her, and I was willing that they should suit themselves during their month of occupancy; but alas and alas! an hour before dinner they came to me in a body with the cry of, 'Oh, mother, we've been so busy with those horrid things that we did n't know what time it was, and what shall we do?' Well, it was lucky that the roast beef was nearly raw. We broiled slices of it, and called it steak; we boiled potatoes, and after one of the girls had beaten up eggs for a custard, the other stirred it over the fire, and the third saw to cooling it; so that we had a sufficiently good dinner, although there was a certain unpleasant likeness between it and the repast of the previous day. The afternoon was spent in completing the work of rearrangement and in washing dishes, and at tea we had oatmeal and berries instead of an elaborate meal like that of the previous night.

"The girls slept late the next morning, for they had had a hard day's work, and the breakfast

table was set in a style that would have appalled Miss Parloa or Miss Corson, and eggs and bread made up our bill of fare. Then the three held a council of war. There was bread to make and a dinner to plan, and after the roast beef their list of meats seemed to be exhausted. Mutton they did not like, veal and pork were declared unwholesome by the chemist of the trio, corned meat did not suit their fancy, aside from the fact that boiling it would fill the kitchen with steam; and they might have discussed the matter until this time if lobster had not suggested itself to them as 'so easy.' Lobster it was, then, and a chocolate custard by way of a slight change; and I was not surprised when my husband brought home a can of crackers at night, and dryly said, 'When you find yourself too hungry to be satisfied with these, come and dine with me. I shall take my dinners down town the rest of the week.' Men do hate sweet puddings so!"

Did n't you know that, girls? Well, take it for a maxim in cooking that when you are preparing a dinner for your father or your brothers, you must expend the greatest care on the meat, and not prepare the sweet puddings that girls like with any idea that they will please men.

"Well," the lady went on, "we lived on cake the rest of the week, and some of it was pretty

good ; but when Jenny's week began I was thankful. Jenny's strong point was wholesome food, and we did n't have much besides Graham bread and oatmeal and berries and fish during her reign. It was good for our brains, perhaps; but by Saturday we were ready for something else, and Minnie promised it to us. My dear, I don't know what our ice bill was for that week, but I suspect that it was stupendous. We did n't have frozen bread, to be sure, but we had water-ices and ice-cream, and frozen fruit and sherbets until I expected to find myself turned into a lump of ice some morning. Minnie said that cool food was best for us in summer-time, and that meat and vegetables heated the blood, and that when the fourth week came she expected that it would be given up to her without a question. We held a little family meeting about it, the girls' father in the chair, and myself acting as a very meek secretary. The girls presented their claims in turn, and then their father spoke : —

" ' My dears,' he said, ' you 've all tried very hard,' — the girls sighed in assent,— ' and we are grateful to you ; but we are tired of custard, tired of brain food, and tired of ice-cream. My dears, when you are cooking for five persons, it won't do to consult your individual tastes or even your comfort. You must try to prepare something to

please everybody, and you must think hard about it, and not fall into the trick of giving several similar meals in succession. I asked your mother one day during Minnie's reign how she managed to give us a variety, and she said by thinking about it, and told me that the thinking was the hardest part of the housekeeping. Now, suppose you try to assist her until you know all the details of the work, and do a little thinking meanwhile, until you can plan dinners for a week at least without falling into sameness.'

"'But, father,' said Minnie, 'who is to have next week?'

"'Did n't I tell you,' he said quizzically, 'neither one. We are not ready to die just yet, your mother and I, and she will take next week.'

"So we had a little laugh, and I took my old place again, but the girls really help me better for their brief experience of responsibility, and take pleasure in talking over the troubles that they enjoyed, as the old gentleman said when remembering his past life."

Did any other girls ever have a similar experience?

AROUND THE MONKEYS' CAGE.

"The boys around the monkey's cage would better keep away," sang a gay voice as Our Tender walked into a brown nest of a parlor the other day, and in answer to her astonished look the lady of the house said, "I 'm in earnest. He 's fearful when he 's roused."

"What do you mean?" the visitor asked, looking from the brown curtains with their crimson linings, to the brown carpet with its crimson border and the brown walls with dashes of color here and there, and lastly at the little woman who stood in the middle of the floor, her brown eyes flashing with fun, and a provoking smile on her lips.

And all the answer was the same naughty verse, and then something clutched at the folds of Our Tender's frock, and on her arm the smallest of monkeys perched himself, and grinned and chatted at her as if he found the whole world one immense joke, and considered himself the best part of it. He was a funny little creature, but Our Tender requested to have him taken away, out of regard for her best hat, upon which he seemed to have designs, and so his mistress shut him up in his little cage, and said, "I suppose

he 'll stay there about half a minute, before he 'll look so sad that I 'll have to let him out, poor Jocko! He wants to be with me all the time, but he is so mischievous! I 'm glad that he is going away in a week. My brother brought him from South America, and is going to take him away to his country house, where he will enjoy himself through the summer, but when the winter comes, I am afraid that he will wish himself away, if he can wish, poor little fellow!"

"He looks bright enough," Our Tender said, as Master Jocko grasped the bars of his cage, and gazed through them with the same expression to be seen on the face of small boys or girls as they stare through an iron railing, at flowers or fruit which are not theirs, but which they would like to have.

"He 's bright enough," said the lady. "Bright enough to run up curtains and sit on the pole, and defy any human creature to catch him before he can run down, and up another curtain. Bright enough to eat any and every kind of fruit that you will give him, and to look, if not exactly over his shoulder for more, at least into every hole and corner, in which fruit may possibly be. He fell into the big Japanese jar the other day, under the impression that the rose-leaves and orris-root at the bottom might be good for monkeys to eat, and

the number of times that he has been dragged out of all kinds of boxes and bags is more than I like to count. I think of tying a feather duster to his tail, and making his trips to the top of the book-cases useful, but perhaps he would not like it."

"He 's a little creature," Our Tender said, contrasting him with the great orang-outangs of the circuses and zoölogical gardens.

"Yes, he is a marmoset, and very small even for his species, which is one of the smallest among monkeys. He is brown, you see, and would match my room pretty well, if I had the courage to keep him, but some of his tribe are gray and white, and some have crests and queer little manes, which he has not. Nice Jocko! So he should come out," and come out he did, and perched on the lady's head a second or so, but the attractions of the curtain were too much for him, and in a minute or two he was sitting on the pole and looking down with an air of condescending wisdom. Mollie tried to coax him to come to play with her, but he knew far too much for that, and so she asked our friend if she would please tell her something about monkeys. "You must know a great deal about them, I think," she said, modestly, "for my mother told me that you had had four in your house, and one was a big one."

Our friend laughed as she said, "Oh yes, the first was Neddy. He was a gibbon, and came from Asia, and the marmoset is a quiet lamb compared to him, my dear child; he could swing himself along by his arms from one end to the other of the garden, clinging to trees and trellises, and when frightened down he would run away exactly like a naughty boy, not touching his arms to the ground, as most apes do, but reaching out now and then as if in search of something to climb. He had no tricks worth mentioning, and you could not teach him much, and there is so little difference between the words donkey and monkey, and he was so very dull, that at last we gave him the donkey's name, and it was 'Neddy' whom we would find swinging from the apple-tree by the hour, and 'Neddy' who would appear in the morning, clinging to the stair rails at the very top of the house. He went away to New Orleans after a while, and is dead.

"Then my brother brought an orang-outang to stay here two or three days, until the circus proprietor who had bought him came for him; and the life that he led us! A rather silly lady, who used white powder and pink powder to make her face look younger, was staying with us then, and Long John, as they called him, hid himself behind a curtain, and saw her put the things on one day

before dinner. He learned all about it in one lesson, and about the time the pudding was served he walked into the dining-room, a thing of beauty. His cheeks were redder than a Jacqueminot rose, and his forehead was a great deal whiter than any alabaster, and he had stolen a fan and was pretending to use it, and as he walked along, with his head on one side, he looked so like the poor lady that she herself was conscious of it, and everybody else knew where he had stolen the airs and powders. I was sorry, not only because she was my guest, but because she was good in spite of her foolishness, and had been very kind to me before; but she never forgave me, and Long John went away in sore disgrace. They tell me that he is very naughty at the circus, but I don't believe that he ever does anything more wicked than his trick with my friend's powders.

"Then as I had had those two creatures in the house, and had not actually died of it, a friend who was going to Europe brought me what she was pleased to call a wipsey-wopsey darling of a monkey, and asked me to take care of it. My dear, it was one of those woolly monkeys that can do anything with their tails, except write their names. It was of no use to tie it up, for it would reach out with that tail and pick up anything

within reach, and when it was not tied it would walk about, looking as innocent as a spring chicken, and by-and-by that tail would give a twist, and something a foot behind it would be swept around. It made no difference to the wipsey-wopsey darling whether it was a vase to be broken or a nut to be eaten, that his tail caught and kept, and I wipsey-wopseyed him down to the dog-doctor's until my friend's steamer was signalled in the harbor, and when she came home I gave him up to her with the greatest pleasure.

"The fourth monkey was Pedro, and there was no wipsey-wopsey darling about him. He was a night monkey, and slept all day, and kept us from sleeping all night. If we shut him out in the halls he made so much noise with the lamps, and among the hats and canes and coats, that we were wide awake half the time. If we left him shut up in a room, everything in it was in elfish disorder before morning. If we tried, as we did once, to let him stay in a bedroom over-night, he did more scratching about the room than a legion of rats, and upset more things than an army of cats and dogs, besides feeling our faces every few minutes. He belonged to a cousin who left him with us for a week or two, on the ground that having had three others in the house we knew how to take care of him, but was I not glad

when he went away? I declared that no other should ever come here, but — there 's Jocko, you see! When you make a reputation for taking care of animals it never leaves you, and every monkey that my sailor kinsmen bring home will probably find its way here sooner or later."

Mollie looked as if she did not think that would be much of a misfortune. Should you?

LITTLE JESSE JAMES.

Well, dear boys, you who like to read about robbers and robberies, who enjoy stories of daring rides to escape the officers of justice, of bold attacks upon travellers on lonely roads; who are filled with admiration for a man who carries a small arsenal at his belt, and is ready to murder any fellow-creature who will not consent to be robbed with meekness, you had a week or two of charming reading, did you not, while the newspapers were telling you about Jesse James, the Missouri outlaw; about his death, shot down like a dog by one of his band who wanted the reward offered to his murderer by the State? There was no need to open the dime novels, was there, for

there was nothing in them so wicked as the wickedness of his life, nothing so dramatic as his death.

Consider how beautiful it was, Jimmy, and Jackey, and Tommy, and all the rest of you who pore over the dime novels and story papers! Jesse James was thirty six years old when he died; it is a fatal age for great men, they say; you all know the poet who passed away at thirty-six, leaving behind him that noble, "A man's a man for a' that," the tender beauty of "Ye banks and braes and streams around the castle of Montgomerie;" leaving, too, that noble "Cotter," so full of charity and true manliness, and also songs that shall be sung as long as our language lasts. You all know of him, and you also know of the painter who laid down brush and pencil at thirty-six, having given to the world pictures so exquisite, so holy in idea, that they have helped thousands to think good thoughts and to live good lives, and will always hold mankind under their strong but beneficent sway. Was it not a beautiful coincidence that Jesse James should die at the same age as they? Why, Burns at fourteen was obeying his father, living his honest peasant's life, and perhaps dreaming of his poems; and Raphael was studying his art with Perugino, with visions of the beautiful Madonnas that he was yet to paint, float-

ing before his youthful eyes; but little Jesse James, at fourteen, boldly went and asked to be admitted to a band of robbers, and when told that he was too young, he soon showed that he was not by rendering valuable services to them, and in a year had become so accomplished and brilliant in his profession, that in one fight he shot thirty-six men. Nay, he even grew to be so brave that he could stand and hand pistols to another man that he might shoot down thirty-two sick soldiers one after another. Did you ever hear of anything so beautiful as that in a boy of fifteen? But he went on improving, and actually became so daring, that, with a rifle in his hand and half a dozen revolvers and a bowie knife in his belt, and leaving a dozen men in the street to fire at any one who approached, he would go into a bank and order the cashier to give him all the money, and shoot him if he did not, or even if he did, sometimes. He was not afraid to board a railway train crowded with men, women and children, and to force them to give him all their money, provided he had arms enough and companions enough to back him.

And he led a life so gay, so bold, so adventurous, that it is really delightful to read about it! Why, at one time, after he had been chased out of a town in which he had killed an unac-

commodating bank cashier for not opening a safe lock for him, he was pursued nearly 500 miles. Some of his men were shot, his brother was wounded, and another man was so badly hurt that the blood from his wounds dripped along the road. You think that brave Jesse took tender care of his comrade, eh? The brutal, sickening truth is that he wanted to kill him lest his pursuers should follow up the trail made by the blood, and he would have done it had not the man's brother declared that he would shoot him if he did. And then Jesse and his brother rode off by themselves, and the other men who chose to stay by their wounded companion were all captured, simply because they would not accept Jesse's counsel.

Why does Our Tender, who protests against dime novels, repeat all this to her boys? Not because she likes it, but to make them see how the incidents that might be made into a tolerable story appear when simply told, and also for another reason which the boys will soon understand.

At the end of Jesse James's twenty-two years of robbery and murder, do you think that he was rich? Do you suppose that his wife and children are to live in plenty on the spoils that he won from true men? How much money do you think that he had when he died? Millions, thousands? Be-

tween $700 and $800! Why, an honest, hard-working mechanic, taking plenty of amusement as he goes through life, laying up something for his old age, and giving something in charity, would be ashamed not to have a larger sum than that after twenty-two years of toil. Our Tender knows more than one servant who has more money to show for infinitely less work than Jesse James performed. Do you ask what became of all that he stole? It is estimated that in fourteen years he and his band took at different times money and property worth $256,000! Where did it go? Well, in the first place, $256,000 for fourteen years is only $18,285 for one year, and Jesse was not alone in his work; he had twenty-eight companions, so that his share was less than $650 a year, and granting that he took a larger share than the rest, it can hardly have amounted to more than $1,000 a year. Would you consider that sum sufficient payment for nights in which you had not a moment of safe rest; days in which you dared not move without your pistols; for hardship of every kind; for the lack of a home; for the total loss of trust and friendship? Should you not think the way of the transgressor was hard indeed if you found yourself receiving those wages for that life, even if you did not have to commit murder and theft in order to earn them? Should you

see any romance, or pleasure, or luxury, in such a career?

And think of the awful end of it all! Nothing like the pretty story-books in that last scene! The robber is shot down by one of his own band the very first moment that he lays his arms aside. There is no time for repentance, or for making any of the gallant speeches to be found in the books; no time for anything before the life passes away from the strong body, and nobody to weep but a few women! Think that this end, or something almost as bad, has been that of nearly all James's companions. Two are in the penitentiary for ninety-nine years; three for twenty-five years; others for fourteen years; one or two, Jesse killed himself; others have been shot by the officers of justice; others by citizens to whom they refused to yield themselves. Two are living, besides the brothers who shot James; one of these killed one companion and betrayed another to secure his liberty; and the other is Frank James, Jesse's brother, and he is lame for life, and a price is set upon his head. This is the end of men who rob and steal for $650 a year. Do you, or do you not think that honesty is the best policy? It is not an ennobling line of argument, but it is quite as lofty as anything in the dime novels and the story-papers. If you have ever been tempted by them.

you will not find this prosaic statement of the case too low for your consideration, and you would better think it over carefully before you cease to try to be honest and good and brave, and decide to be a robber.

PERFECTLY FRANK.

THE Frank Boy came in to see Our Tender the other day, and, as usual, made mischief before he had been in the house half an hour. He told Our Tender exactly what one of her dearest friends thought of her last new frock, and of her general taste in dress, and as it was anything but flattering, she was not very well pleased; he told the children that So-and-so thought them too noisy, and Somebody said that they were too quiet, and that his mother thought them no worse than most children; and he told so much about what was said and done in his own house, that before he could be stopped, Our Tender learned two or three family secrets which were never meant for her ears, and had to scold him a little.

"You are fifteen years old now, Charlie," she said, "and you really ought not to tell everything like a little boy in frocks. There are things in

every house which the mistress and master choose to keep private, and it is in bad taste for the children to make them public. Your mother does not go out in the street to put on that new 'switch' that you say is so pretty; why should you go and tell the street all about it? Your father does not advertise his losses by Mr. Smith's failure; why should you take it upon yourself to do so? Your sisters will tell me all about their reading club when they are ready to start it. Why should you forestall them by repeating their plans to me? And why should you have told me that little story to your own disadvantage?"

"I believe that perfect truth never hurt anybody," replied the young man, with a look of saintly virtue.

"If you had said that it never did anybody any good, your speech would not have been much more unwise," was the answer. "Those occasions upon which it is wise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, are very few. You must not tell falsehoods under any circumstances whatever, but there is no reason why you should not keep your own affairs to yourself, and no reason why you should tell anything which you know of the affairs of others. You put yourself under subjection to those to whom you chatter by telling them all about your-

self, and you make independence an impossibility for yourself. You would not like to find the walls of your house suddenly turned to glass; why should you pull down all the barriers between yourself and others, and show them all your motives and feelings?"

"It does n't make my father's losses any bigger or any smaller to tell of them," objected the Frank Boy; "and my sisters would be willing that you should know anything about their club."

"But it might make your father lose more money if anybody whom he owed should hear of that loss, and should begin pressing him for payment; or it might give him the reputation of being unfortunate, which is bad for any business man; and the girls may not want to ask all the world to join their club, nor wish somebody else to steal their plans and start one before them. There are very few things which should be told, young gentleman."

"What can you talk about, then?" he asked.

"You can find plenty of topics besides yourself and your plans and your thoughts and your doings, and plenty besides the conduct and acts of other persons who have given you their confidence. When you are with very dear friends you may be frank, but it is best not to tell them everything. You know Burns's —

'Aye free off-hand your story tell
When wi' a bosom crony;
But still keep something to yoursel'
You hardly tell to ony.'

"The men who have the most power are those whom no one understands: whose course no one can predict; who do not tell all that they know."

"I am not ambitious," Master Charles said, looking as meek as a boy can, when he is very cross.

"But you don't want to be a tool for somebody who is, do you? And that is what you make of yourself when you go about, putting yourself into the power of every creature that you meet. And then again, persons to whom you tell all that you can almost always underestimate you, and look on you with more or less contempt, as you regard a machine which you understand perfectly. They can sound you from your lowest note to the top of your compass, and you are but a toy to them, whereas if you had kept your own secrets, they would have respected you because they would not have understood you. But please don't look cross or sad over it, Charlie. You can't have revealed much of yourself to anybody yet, because you are so young, and you will grow wiser as you grow older, if you stop to think a little now and then. I spoke now because it seemed a good opportu-

nity to make you begin to think. If you could look forward ten years, and realize how cross you will be with yourself then, for the revelations which you make now, you would thank me for stopping you, but you can't and you won't. You 'll be cross with me, and stiff in your manner with me for two or three years, until your frankness has made you some trouble, and then you 'll be my friend again."

Well, he went away, and Our Tender really expected that it would be as she had predicted, but he ran in again the next day, and said he, "I give it up. I never will tell all that I think again. This summer in the mountains I met the principal of our school, and he seemed so very pleasant that I talked to him as if he were another boy, told him whom I liked and whom I did not like among the teachers, and now he puts me in Mr. B.'s class, and tells me privately that he does it because he knows that I don't like Mr. C., and every boy that I like is in Mr. C.'s room! If I had been a little reserved with him, I should have gone to Mr. C., but of course I cannot tell him that I am not satisfied with his plans. I shall have a whole year of repentance, ma'am, but I 'll never tell all my thoughts to anybody again."

But he will. Reticence is a plant of slow growth, and Charlie is so frank now that he will

have to have many a hard lesson before he will begin to cultivate it. And how is it with you? Have you proper reserve and discretion?

SPONGES.

It was not quite time for the seashore when Mollie and Bessie revived the old amusements which they learned there in past seasons, and one morning they began an interesting game which they are pleased to call a sponge fight, and played two or three rounds before the higher powers intervened and convinced them that the locality was not quite suitable to the amusement. Do you ever have sponge fights, or do you live so far away from the rivers and from the sea that you have no place in which to indulge in them? Perhaps you would like to hear about them.

The time for a sponge fight, you must know, is when you have just come out of the bath, and your bathing-dress is so dripping wet that nothing can possibly make it any wetter; the place is the bathing-house, or the open beach, or river-bank, and the weapons the biggest wet sponges that you own. The rules of the game are almost like

those which govern a pillow fight: *i. e.* 1. Throw your missile as often as you can. 2. Throw your opponent's whenever you can catch it. 3. Hit your opponent in the face as often as possible. 4. Use only clear water to fill the sponge; salt water and soap suds are unfair. There is no "science" about the play, you see, and the boys may be excused for doubting if there could be, in a game in which girls are allowed to throw things at each other, but in default of science there is a great deal of innocent amusement. It is very nice, just as your opponent has opened her mouth to tell you how large and wet her sponge is, to stop the flow of her eloquence by throwing your own at her, and when she recovers herself, and stands before you holding up the two, it is delightful to produce an extra one and defy her with it. Then the cool splash with which the soft sponge strikes one is anything but disagreeable, and the running and jumping, and, if the truth must be told, the screaming, usual in the game, are very enjoyable when one is fresh from the water. Sponge fights, children, are, as the mice said when they pulled the cat's tail through a hole in the fence, "real good fun."

Bessie and Mollie, when their sponge fight was nipped in the bud, immediately sought the consolation of science, although they did not use any

such phrase about it, but abruptly inquired, "What is a sponge, anyway?"

"Are they woven like the towels?" asked Mollie, examining hers, and trying to see some threads in it.

"It looks more like velvet," said Bessie, "with those little fine hairs all over it."

"Its seems more like wool than silk," rejoined Mollie, "there 's nothing silky about that."

"But it is really very much like silk," said Our Tender. "It resembles the threads of the silk worm's cocoon more than anything else, unless it be the threads that are a part of another little sea-animal."

"Is a sponge an animal?" inquired the two girls in a breath, and looking slightly incredulous, as well they might.

"Oh, yes. You did not think that a man could make anything so delicate and yet so durable, so plain and simple at first sight, and so beautiful when carefully examined, as that, did you? The sponge is the skeleton of a little creature which once clung to a rock at the bottom of the ocean, and ate and breathed and lived there, until some man pulled him off with a long fork and carried him away in a boat. Then he died. The soft jelly that filled up all these little holes dried away, and only the skeleton was left to be soaked in

acid to clean it, and then sent across the ocean for Miss Bessie to use."

"How did it eat and breathe and drink?" Mollie asked, gently, looking as if she expected to find a mouth somewhere on her sponge, and a pair of lungs inside it.

"Well, it drank all the time, you see; every moment the water surged through and through it, and it was all mouths. Whenever a morsel of food fell anywhere on that jelly which served the sponge for flesh, it was surrounded and covered up in a moment, and the sponge ate anything and everything that came to it, not being fastidious like some little girls."

"Has n't the sponge any bones at all?" the children wished to know.

"It has a few fragments of lime or flint scattered here and there in its jelly, but only a few, and the smaller their number the better the sponge. The really important parts are these little things which you call hairs and which give the surface that velvety look which is so pretty. These little hairs keep the water moving through and through the sponge, and draw any passing food towards it."

The girls could not force themselves to believe that the pair of yellowish brown soft lumps which they could crush in their hands, had ever been

alive, and they turned the conversation by comparing the two, and wondering from what part of the world they came, and then, at last, they grew very prosaic indeed, and asked why it was that one sponge was so much firmer than the other, although the two seemed quite alike when new.

"I suspect," said Our Tender, "that the reason of the difference is that one sponge is always squeezed almost dry, when used, while the other is allowed to retain the water for hours, and is almost always very wet. By and by it will grow slimy, and then it will be necessary to soak it in oxalic acid and to drench it with water afterwards, and unless that is done very carefully, it will be spoiled by the acid. A drop or two of ammonia, now and then, will keep a sponge neat, but if it be squeezed dry, hot soap suds is all that is necessary."

"Where do the very white sponges, which are sold in the streets, grow?" asked Mollie.

"In precisely the same places as the other, but many of them are second-hand, and no economical person buys them. Indeed, nobody who is very sensible buys them, for they are cheap simply because they have been used in the hospitals, and have been thrown away. They cost nothing to the men who sell them, and they can afford to ask very little for them."

"What makes sponges smell so nice when they are new?" asked Bessie, with a sniff of remembrance.

"Because they come from Smyrna, the city which sends us most of our sponges, in the same ships with many fine drugs, and also because the apothecaries who sell them have so many nice things in their shop. The toilet sponge itself has no odor at all, but the coarse carriage sponges which come from the Bahamas have a smell, and a very bad smell, too, when they first come out of the water. The small, fine sponges, which you call baby sponges, are the most expensive, because they are very scarce. That is all that I know about sponges, and if you ask me any more questions you will be none the wiser."

"Are the sponges that we saw in the brook one summer of any use?" Bessie inquired.

"Of no use to us, but they must be of some use or they would not be there, you know. There is one thing which you ought to be told about the flint in the sponge, and that is that it is precisely the same as the hard flints with which fire used to be struck before matches were invented. Some men of science think that all the flints in the world were once inside sponges, but that is a matter of guess work at present."

"I have seen a picture of a sponge-diver, some-

where," said Mollie, "although I forgot all about it until now. You said that they fished for the sponges with a fork."

"And so they do; but in some places in which the water is clear and not too deep, men dive for them, as they dive for pearls, that disease of the oyster for which we pay so much when it is made into ornaments."

"I can dive," Bessie remarked.

"And all little girls should learn, so as not to be too much frightened to jump into the water should it become necessary, as it sometimes does when a vessel is burning or is wrecked."

"Such a lot of things to learn," Mollie sighed.

"And a whole life to learn them in, Mollie," Our Tender answered, "and a whole life in which to be happier because they are learned. There is no crowding; you never have to learn two things at once, and what you need to learn for your real happiness comes to you as easily as what the sponge needs comes to it, if you will only have faith to believe it. Life and learning are hard or easy as you choose to take them and make them. Do you understand that, little Mollie?"

Do you?

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